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THE WORKS

OF

THE REV. DANIEL M'CALLA, D. D.

PASTOR OF THE INDEPENDENT OR CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, IN THE PARISH OF CHRIST'S CHURCH, SOUTH-CAROLINA.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A FUNERAL DISCOURSE,

CONTAINING A SKETCH OF THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF THE AUTHOR, BY THE REV. WILLIAM HOLLINSHEAD, D. D.

VOL. II.

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JAMES JERVEY,
Clerk of the district of South-Carolina.

PRINCETON THEOLOGICAL

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REMARKS ON THE THEATRE,

AND

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. I.

IT is certainly a great unhappiness in the taste and inclinations of mankind, that they generally prefer amusement to instruction, and things of a vicious tendency to those of a virtuous. On this principle, many things have been contrived to dissipate thought and reflection, and to destroy the sense of moral obligation, in order to obviate the pain, and overcome the restraint arising from it. Among these expedients, nothing has been found better adapted to the purpose, than the entertainments of the stage.

The stage, indeed, in its first institution, had, besides the design of entertainment, that of promoting sentiment also; because, at that time, there were few books, and they only in the hands of a few men of leisure and improvement; the bulk of the people had no means of private instruction. But necessary as plays then seemed to be, they were not admitted on the stage before they had

undergone examination by the magistrates, or some private person of approved knowledge or virtue.

The Greeks, it is true, were not in several respects, a people of rigid virtue ; but, till their taste and manners became corrupted, they were careful that their public entertainments should be such, that a virtuous man might attend them, at least, without offence.

As their tragedies were designed to excite tender sympathy, and the dread of atrocious crimes and their necessary punishments, they were encouraged and attended by some of their most eminent philosophers, on the apprehension that these passions served to purify the mind. But, if any thing appeared in public that seemed contrary to this effect, it was publicly condemned—a circumstance exceedingly necessary in the exhibition of most modern plays.

Their comedies, which exhibited scenes of common life, were seldom attended by men of solid and distinguished improvement ; because they represented nothing of importance enough to engage the attention of men who observed the world, and saw every day something of the same kind ; and because they did not tend to move the higher and more exalted passions. Socrates often attended the exhibition of a tragedy but would never see a comedy, unless it was the work of a

particular friend, or that he went out of complaisance to those who pressed him. His objection was, that comedies generally represented the lower scenes of life, with the passions and sentiments which occasioned them; and were therefore rather adapted to depress than elevate the soul; and too often they offended, by their ridicule of serious and useful characters. Of the ill effect of this, himself was a remarkable example: by the influence of a comedy, he lost his life; and that, too, the work of a man whose performances he had encouraged by his presence. It was a work equally offensive to God and good men; and I am inclined to think, that much the smallest number of comedies, since the Clouds of Aristophanes, have been of a much better character and tendency. Some, it is acknowledged, have been composed with a better intention; but there are few which do not offend by the low and vulgar scenes they represent, tending to make vice and folly familiar, rather than odious.

If the ancients, under the restraints laid upon the stage, so frequently erred, as we know they certainly did, the moderns have undoubtedly gone much farther, having a greater variety, both of vicious characters and scenes, with which to entertain the spectators.

Without entering into a formal comparison of the theatrical works of the ancients with those of

the moderns, or of the moderns with one another, I venture to pronounce that, of all of them, whether tragedies or comedies, the English are the most licentious and vicious. I speak now of those which are usually brought upon the stage, because there are some of British fabrication, both chaste and virtuous; but these are generally such as will not suit the stage, having too much sentiment and too little action. Indeed, the design of attending on the theatre, is not to be instructed, but amused; to dissipate thought, drive away care, and obviate the irksomeness of bearing time and anxious reflection. It is this alone which draws the multitude to the theatre—a promiscuous multitude, who agree scarcely in a single point, except that they may have no serious or useful thought for the present distracted and tumultuous moment. Business, friends, justice and religion, must there be quite forgotten, that they may enjoy scenes which might be seen every day, in small or in great, whether of comedy or tragedy. The action, the scenery, the music, the buffoonery, the vociferation, for the present time, like a vortex, swallow up the attention; the people there are the dupes of mimickry, affectation, and false appearances. On the stage there is no reality, except that chastity is often wounded, virtue slighted, and religion ridiculed and brought into contempt.

There is perhaps no scene upon earth, more truly trifling and ridiculous. As if intrigue, vicious amours, dishonor and flattery, cruelty and murder, were not frequent enough in real life, they are represented on the stage, in mere fiction, to entertain and divert mankind.

This is the great school of virtue to which all sorts of people, high and low, rich and poor, resort for instruction in sentiment and virtue. But why do they need fiction to instruct them, when there is on every side, and every day, so much reality in every case which the stage can represent? Do the disciples of this pretended school of virtue wish their passions to be moved, and their sympathy excited with the too abundant sufferers of the world, they need never be at a loss for scenes which may well move them, and which it is the dictate of humanity to attend. Let them visit the suffering poor, in whose open decayed dwellings they may see, in this cold season, whole families shivering, hungry and naked, over a few coals, insufficient to warm and cherish them: let them repair to jails and work-houses, to sick and dying beds, where every thing may be seen to affect the tender passions; where every sufferer acts his proper part, with sentiment and sorrow, not fictitious, but real.

If grief and sympathy, and dread of similar suffering, can purify the soul and inspire benevo-

lent and virtuous sentiments, it is from reality, and not representation, that we are to expect it; and there are scenes sufficient for the purpose, if we wish to be improved by the views of human wretchedness.

If the admirers and disciples of the stage wish to strengthen their love of virtue, and their dislike of vice, why need they visit the theatre for this good purpose! when every street, and lane, and wharf of Charleston, and every other populous city, may afford them scenes of mimickry, buffoonery, intrigue, chicanery, and every other vice that dishonors human nature, makes a man of feeling blush for the depravity of his species, and wish to find some retreat where he could forget the follies and miseries of mankind.

The stage a school of virtue! It is a ridicule of virtue, it is an insult to common sense to call it such, when every man, acquainted with the history of it, knows it not to be intended to inculcate virtue; but is too generally productive of an effect quite the reverse.

If its advocates would honestly acknowledge what themselves must know, and what every man can at once see, that it is merely to divert, and has not for ages had any other intention, or been conducted to produce any other effect, they might be more readily pardoned: but when they set it up as a place to inculcate virtue, and promote the

serious designs of human life, it is so mere a pretension, that nothing can be more ridiculous.

It is very remarkable, that in most comedies, where a very good character appears, it is generally above imitation; and a vicious one is commonly viler in the representation than reality; so that every thing is here distorted and extravagant. In short, whether we consider the theatre itself, the plays brought upon it, the characters of players in general, and the effects on the sentiments and manners of people where the theatre is most frequented, it is in every view a pernicious thing. To support this, there are abundant topics of argument, which, in a proper time, will be farther prosecuted by

SYLVANUS.

January 10, 1794.

Sylvanus—on Amusements—No. II.

THAT amusements are allowable and often necessary, cannot be denied, on the principles of the most rigid virtue; but that they are neither so necessary nor innocent as the bulk of mankind seem to think, is equally true.

It is in this case, as in most others, that men consult their inclinations rather than their reason and conscience; and prefer a latitude of indulgence, however inconvenient and pernicious, to

confinement and restraint, however needful and salutary: and to this principle may be ascribed almost all the errors of mankind, that render them unhappy in themselves and injurious to others. On the subject of amusements, the following observations will, I apprehend, comprize the most material rules for judging in what cases they may be lawfully and innocently used.

1. They ought never to disqualify us for useful thought and employment; but should be used so as to render us more capable of both. We are placed in the world for serious purposes; and nothing can be innocent that renders us inattentive to them, or incapable of pursuing them. From this it results,

2. That amusements which greatly hurry and dissipate our thoughts, and which excite extravagant and discordant emotions, especially for a considerable length of time, are injurious to the serious designs of life; because they raise both our thoughts and passions above the controul of reason and the sense of duty, and tend to weaken the power of self-command, which, in every condition and at all times, is of the greatest necessity and importance. How difficult it is to keep the attention as fixed, our purposes as determined, and our passions as even as the state of life requires, at all times; and especially how hard it is to recover this state of the mind, after it has been consider-

ably interrupted, must be known to every person who is engaged in serious pursuits.

3. When amusements are so long continued, or so frequently repeated, as to take up an undue proportion of our time, encroaching on our proper employments and necessary duties, they are unlawful and hurtful. We have so many indispensable duties to perform, so short a time to perform them in, and so many unavoidable interruptions, that a small proportion of our time can be allowed to amusements, if we would wish to acquit ourselves honorably, and not incur the guilt of sacrificing reason and conscience to mere inclination and pleasure.

4. When amusements tend to deprave the sense of virtue and religion, rendering us inattentive to them, or careless of performing them, they are highly criminal and hurtful. Virtue and religion comprehend the whole of our obligations, and form the reasons on which every part of our conduct is to be framed and directed. The regard to our own happiness, to the good of others, and to the will of God, comprehends every obligation. We are therefore not at liberty to indulge our inclinations in cases that may interfere with these duties. Every gratification, every purpose, and every plan of conduct, is to coincide with them.

5. Our amusements ought never to be so expensive as to interfere with the discharge of our

just debts, with the offices of charity to the necessitous, or with a prudent regard for our own comfortable subsistence, or that of those immediately under our care. Agreeable to this rule, no man is at liberty to indulge his pleasures, when the price of them is the property of another; because it is a violation of the first law of justice, and breaks one of the strongest bonds of social life. When these demands are discharged, if any thing can be spared from our own necessities, the poor have undoubtedly a claim on us for a part—a claim, enforced both by our natural feelings, and the laws of our religion. To indulge, then, in unnecessary amusements, while others are suffering about us, and when what we thus expend, might relieve them from some pressing want, is equally unchristian and inhumane. But besides our obligation in such a case, to a generous mind there is an higher and more refined pleasure in relieving the distressed, than can arise from any scene of amusement in which a man can be engaged. As to our personal wants, and those of our families and connections, it is a first law of nature, reason and religion, to regard them so far as, at least, to be above suffering, and the need of bounty. On this principle, if we give to mere amusements what ought to be applied to our real wants, it is acting a part equally absurd and criminal. When a man can deny himself or family an article of food, cloath-

ing, or any accommodation necessary to a comfortable subsistence, for a gratification neither necessary for the subsistence nor solid enjoyment of life, it is an argument of a mind that has made no just estimate of things, and of a tase for pleasure which has overcome the first sense of nature, and the first dictate of reason: and yet it is a case which very often occurs, to the reproach of human nature, and the detriment of society.

To the preceding rules several others might have been added; but as they are sufficient for the design of this essay, I will dismiss the subject for the present, after subjoining a few remarks, to point out the cases in which amusements are chiefly, or only, necessary, and what kind are proper for the particular circumstances of those who need them.

Amusements are necessary chiefly, or only, for the busy, the infirm and dejected, or the aged.

Men of business may be divided into those whose employments require much action and but little thought, or much action and thought together, or much thought only. In the first case, rest is the most proper and necessary relaxation, as the mind is supposed to have been fatigued. In the second case, where the mind is supposed to have been wearied by too much thought, as well as the body exhausted by too much action—for the latter rest is necessary, and the amusements such as will

unbind, and refresh the former. In this case, pleasant company and conversation, or music, or books of innocent entertainment, history, travels, geography, and other compositions that do not require very close attention, are the proper and the best amusements. If the employment is sedentary, without intense thought, as in many mechanical engagements, the amusement should be action, walking, riding, and other exercises which give vigor to the benumbed powers of the body. If the employment be sedentary, and requires intense thought and study, the amusements proper in this case are, for the body, brisk and lively action, and a diversion of the thoughts to subjects of a familiar and cheerful kind. Next to action, are pleasant conversation, music, and books that entertain and improve without fatiguing the attention. As to the infirm, dejected and aged, such action as the body will bear without fatigue, variety of objects that do not distract the attention, or too long keep it up, agreeable company, and whatever may innocently draw off the thoughts from their weaknesses and sufferings, are proper and necessary. I have not mentioned the indolent, who either have no business to do, or will not do it; for them, the best and most proper amusement would be such employment as would occupy their attention, and give action to their bodies. For the pleasurable

and dissipated, I would prescribe the same recreation, or solitude and study.

How far the entertainments of the stage are reconcileable with the preceding rules and observations, will be the subject of another paper, which will appear when opportunity serves.

SYLVANUS.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. III.

An Epistle from a disciple of THALIA, *to a certain* PREACHER.

"HYPOCRISY's son,
No more of your fun,
A truce with fanatical raving—
Why censure the Stage?
'Tis known to the age,
That both of us thrive by deceiving.
'Tis frequently said,
That two of a trade
Will boldly each other bespatter:
But, trust me, they're fools,
Who play with edg'd tools—
So let's have no more of the matter."

City Gazette--from the Boston Centinel.

I SHOULD not have deigned to take notice of this mean scrap of doggrel, but that it affords a direct argument in favor of what I have advanced against the general character and tendency of the stage.

Conscious that it is incapable of being defended by fair reasoning, its advocates, and especially the

players, have no other means of recommending it to the popular taste, than ridicule of seriousness; which they find, by experience, is that alone which can support it.

To represent all pretensions to sobriety and religion, as mere hypocrisy and fanaticism, words of great consequence to players, so well takes with the depraved taste of mankind, that it is better understood and more sensibly felt, by the vulgar, than any possible arguments from reason, religion, or public utility. Hypocrisy is a term that has ever been successfully employed against religion and good manners; it has been made the pretext and engine of vice, but is never employed by the friends and advocates of virtue, in any other cause than the good of mankind—not to foster depravity, but to discourage it. This very term, however, so favorable to the interests of the stage, originally belonged to itself.

The first players were masked; and in this situation they were called Hypocrites, that is, men wearing a mask: so that all the reproach of the word falls upon themselves. When most in character, they are most hypocritical; and if deception be mean and criminal, there are no men more so than themselves, because this is their profession. But these words, in the mouths of the players, have a more serious import: when applied to preachers, they do not mean so much the men as

the office. To bring this into discredit, is much more to their purpose, than to weaken the influence of a few individuals.

But is it possible to produce an instance of greater depravity and hostility to mankind, than to aim at reproaching an office, which has for its immediate object, the greatest possible good?—an office, too, which has been honored and encouraged by the greatest and best men that the world has ever seen—an office, which has been filled by the first geniuses and most accomplished characters that have appeared among men. Is it liberality, is it honor, is it justice, to charge that to hypocrisy, which the worthiest and most amiable of mankind have undertaken on principles of benevolence and piety? It has, even among heathens as well as christians, been a maxim—That to endeavor to discredit the professed advocates and officers of religion, is an argument of the highest degree of human depravity. But this is the main and principal artifice of the disciples of Thalia.

Indeed, this kind of men, being engaged in what has ever been deemed a disreputable employment, are obliged to use the meanest and most disreputable methods of keeping themselves in business.

But let us see how far the charges of hypocrisy and fanaticism are to go. Preachers, no doubt, must unavoidably, and in justice, fall under

it; because, how can it be supposed that a preacher can find fault with the stage, and be an honest and sincere man, the real friend of virtue and human happiness? Be it so, as the virtuous disciples of the chaste and religious Thalia would have it, that all preachers, when they oppose the stage, are hypocrites and fanatical ravers, yet certainly there must be sincerity somewhere in the world; and as the players claim the honor of being sincerely vicious, there may be those also who are sincerely virtuous.

Were Socrates, Plato and Plutarch hypocrites and fanatical ravers, because they condemned the Grecian stage as having become "the school of vice, and all criminal passions?"

Was Quintilian,* the most accomplished scholar and critic amongst the Romans, a hypocrite and fanatic, when he says that "the music of the stage had effeminated, by its obscenities, what little manliness remained among them."

Passing by other celebrated writers among the Romans who have left the same indelible reproach upon the stage, let me mention, among the modern French, the most excellent, modest, and accomplished Rollin.

Speaking of the music of the French stage, he says, "which, by its effeminate and wanton airs.

* In the first century.

has given the last wound to the little manly force and virtue that remained among us." Was not Rollin an arrant hypocrite and fanatical raver?

But, let us hear Le Pluche,† as modest, philosophical and elegant a writer as modern times have produced.

Speaking of the taste and application of the ancient mythology, he says—"I content myself with saying, that the habit of busying one's self upon loose and imaginary objects, enervates the mind, renders it trifling, and subject almost to an incurable imbecility. A man taken up with fictions and metamorphoses, is so much accustomed to the most incredible ideas, that things barely reasonable, appear to him cold and lifeless. He contracts an irreverence for truth; the simplicity of nature becomes distasteful to him, and reason no longer maintains any influence on his mind, or at least is much abridged of its authority and its privileges. The truth of what I advance may be found in the trifling characters of those who assiduously frequent public shews, and are much taken up with balls and plays."

He says a little after, "a disgust for what is sound, is the necessary effects of theatrical fable and enchantment."

Speaking on the same subject, he farther adds—that "they are at mighty cost to retain our hearts

† A Frenchman.

in a spirit of irreligion, and our minds in a continual series of wanton sports, whose result must needs be an idle puerility that weakens our character, enfeebles our talents, and, by giving us a disgust for our duties, entirely ruins the reality of them." *Hist. Poet. Heavens, Vol. 2.*

To these severe and pointed charges against the stage, by the best and most accomplished of mankind, I could easily add others sufficient to fill a volume; but these shall suffice for the present.

Let me now ask, whether it is decent, honorable, and virtuous, to charge such men as those from whom I have now quoted, with hypocrisy and fanatical raving? A thousand players put into the scales, will not weigh against one such man—one of whose volumes has done more to accomplish mankind in knowledge and virtuous sentiment, than all that the players have performed, from Euripides * to the present time.

The disciple of Thalia says—

> "Believe me, they're fools,
> That play with edg'd tools"—

They are so: and the greatest of all are those. who unsheath sharp weapons that may be turned against themselves. Yet this is the case with the disciples of the chaste and admirable Thalia. This unblemished lady has omitted, among all her

* Five hundred years before Christ.

instructions, to teach her disciples decency and good manners, and to know how to defend themselves and her with good argument. There is nothing in the world betrays the badness of a cause more, than the using reproachful and vilifying terms; it sinks men below notice and argument, if the cause of truth and virtue did not require that the meanest opponent to them should sometimes be answered.

The players have no doubt inserted this despicable attempt at poetry and defamation, with the same design with which it was put together. They are very welcome to produce as many such precious examples of their true character, as they please: they will be properly noticed, not out of respect to such people, but from regard to the cause of truth. Let them know, there is an ample fund of materials from which to draw, as often as the public good shall seem to require.

This amiable and most poetical disciple of Thalia concludes, with saying,

"So let's have no more of the matter."

Undoubtedly, we are to be silent, whenever this kind of people think they have confuted us, or chuse to make the simple believe they have done so. But the friends of virtue, decency, and good manners, I hope, will never be deterred from supporting what they judge necessary to the good of mankind, or arguing against what they deem

vicious and hurtful, by any thing which such a class of men think proper to produce in support of a forlorn and hopeless cause.

If they determine to pursue an occupation that has been generally deemed among the most disreputable in the world, let them, at least, cease their attempts to discredit the chief and most direct means of human happiness.

If they can maintain themselves by no other means, than those which are used to the great detriment of mankind, let them forbear to reproach and dishonor those which have ever been the most high in the estimation of good sense and virtue.

It is the strongest mark of human depravity to wish to color vice with the semblance of virtue, and to ruin mankind with the promises of making them happy.

SYLVANUS.

N. B. This paper anticipates two others, being inserted by particular desire.

January 14, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. IV.

If it could be supposed that our business, in this world was merely, or chiefly, to sport away a short duration, like children, in the continual pursuit of new entertainments, our amusement might then be our business, and care and serious thought only a relaxation, to renew the relish of pleasure, that we might return to the pursuit of it eager and vigorous.

But certainly, our destination is of a very different, and much more important nature; and the part we have to act must include a course of employment suited to our main design. And, as we are not capable of unremitted thought and action, our relaxation and amusements should be calculated to renew the vigour both of our bodies and minds, and fit us to resume our business with spirit and alacrity.

In this view, our diversions themselves should be in some sort serious; that is, as forming a part of the great plan of our conduct, the whole of which should be managed in reference to that state of our being which is to succeed the present.

How far the entertainments of the stage are conducive to this end, is the subject of this paper.

That they are not conducive to it, but injurious in several respects, will be argued from the following considerations:—

1. They present too great a variety of objects, occasion too much hurry and dissipation of thought, excite too many different passions or emotions, and to too high a pitch to answer the intention of rational amusement.

Variety of objects is undoubtedly necessary to recreation; but, if it be very great, too closely crowded or presented in too quick succession, it rather distracts and fatigues the attention, than relieves it.

Now, this is very much the case at the theatre: the faces, the dresses, the scenery, the action and characters are so various, and crowded into so narrow a compass, that the mind must either be in a very languid, or a very vigorous state, that is not soon wearied with them. Besides, so great a variety, instead of composing the thoughts into such a train as is favorable to the habit of useful recollection and attention, tends to throw it into disorder and confusion, quite contrary to the design of rational amusement.

The passions and emotions also are too various and intense. For a few minutes you are strongly affected with horror, grief, or sympathy; the subject and action are quickly changed, and you are thrown into the opposite extreme of merriment and laughter: and this combination and contrast of character and passion is common in the most celebrated plays that are brought upon the stage—in none

more than Shakespeare himself. This may answer the end of the play writers and players, both of whom have the same objects in view, interest and reputation: but it is very illy suited to qualify the mind for serious employment. I will only remark under this article, that the higher the entertainment is, for the time, the more injurious it is for the purpose above-mentioned; because, as far as the mind has been raised above the point of moderation, during the entertainment, it will sink below it when that is over—a circumstance entirely opposite to the design of recreation, which should always leave us in a state more refreshed and capable of our duties than when we began it.

Agreeable to these remarks, I have known people, after attending a play, quite incapable of their business for two or three days. Their attention was so dissipated or over-strained by the entertainment, and their whole thoughts still so occupied, that they could neither recover their inclination or capacity for business. This effect, I allow, will in some measure wear off by custom, and many, through mere habit, may attend the theatre after they cease to be strongly affected: but this very circumstance is a proof that the entertainment ceases to be rational, and people repair to it, in this case, merely because they do not know otherwise how to dispose of themselves. This leads me to remark—

2. That the entertainments of the stage are calculated to take up too much of our time to favor the serious designs of life.

With many people, I am sensible that this is a consideration of very little moment; but with those who consider the state of human life, and the small portion of it that can be spared from the variety of duties incumbent on us, time will appear an article of the highest importance.

In the management of our amusements, it is a very necessary rule, that they should neither be so long continued at once, nor so often repeated as to infringe upon our indispensible duties. They ought, indeed, to be continued as long as the state of our bodies or minds require to recover their proper tone, and repeated as often as the same circumstance makes necessary. Of this, every one is to be a judge for himself; and it is a happiness to be able to make this judgment right, and act agreeable to it.

I do not now speak of those who have nothing to do, or are indisposed to employment, and whose time consequently lies like a dead weight upon them, and obliges them to look out for continual variety to get rid of their burden: they may as well, perhaps, attend the theatre, as any other entertainment to which their feelings may prompt them. This, indeed, is but a momentary relief, and so would be any other amusement.

To those, however, whose circumstances oblige them to apply to business, or who think it necessary in a serious view of life, it is of great moment to know how much of their time ought to be allotted to recreation, and what may best answer the purpose.

Recreations, infringe on our time when we are anxious for them beforehand; when they are continued longer at once, or are more frequently repeated than is necessary or useful for their proper intention; and when they occupy so much of our attention afterwards, as interferes with the regard due to subjects of indispensable obligation and concern. All these cases, I believe, happen to most people who frequent the theatre; and, perhaps, in no other amusements so certainly, and to so great a degree. It is the business of the players to consult, as much as possible, the taste for novelty, so strong in the human mind, and therefore to vary their scenes and characters as frequently as they can find them suited to their purposes, and prepare them for appearing; and this circumstance, more than any other, succeeds in drawing great numbers to the theatre, and maintaining the occupation of playing.

The expectation of something new every night, unavoidably pre-occupies the attention, and either quite withdraws it from other subjects before they ought to be dismissed, or so interrupts it as to de-

fraud them of their due proportion; from which it must frequently happen, that some personal concern is delayed or left unfinished till another time; and this will especially happen to the young and volatile, and to all whose taste for amusement is continual and intense. In addition to this, the entertainment is prolonged farther than the purpose of recreation can generally require.

Two or three hours at the theatre, at once, is much more than can be either necessary or useful for the most who attend it. It is in every view too much for those who have been confined thro' the day, whether by business or indolence; and they who have been active and fatigued, would be more relieved by an easier posture than the confinement of a seat hemmed in for such a length of time. If this be repeated twice or thrice a week, which I suppose is done by many, it is so far from being an advantage to any serious design of life, that it consumes a larger portion of time than any employment can require, and makes a great breach in the few years of life allotted to the bulk of mankind. If this were the only part of time that is employed in recreation, it would not make so great a chasm, nor be so pernicious; but when added to the other remissions and interruptions that occur to almost every one, it raises the amount to a very serious loss. But the inconvenience does not stop here: the impressions remain after the

entertainment is over; they follow the spectator home again; perhaps abridge the necessary time of sleep; return again in the morning; and recur so often in the day, as to engage a considerable portion of that too. We may therefore estimate that altogether, the stage takes up a third, or nearly an half part of the time of those who constantly frequent it. I might have mentioned before, the time that people of figure take up in dressing for it, the whole of which, in half a year, is more than any one can spare to such a purpose, and makes a very serious amount. From this article I pass to remark,

3. That the entertainments of the stage are generally unfavorable to the sense of virtue and religion, which it is both the interest and duty of every one carefully to maintain.

There are two particulars in which most of the popular plays are very exceptionable, and offend against the most essential rules of morality: I mean their indelicacy and profanity.

It would be very improper to detail examples of this sort; but there is no person acquainted with English plays who cannot produce, from a great part of them, the most shameful insinuations, or direct expressions, in violation of a sense essential to virtue, religion, and the good order and happiness of society. And it is a very high reproach to that sex in particular, to which purity of senti-

ment ought to be the dearest, that it can bear the grossness and immodesty exhibited in many plays of the most popular taste. Add to this the appearance of a lady on the stage in a man's habit, which has often been done, is, I think, an offence against good manners, which argues an high degree of depravity.

As to profanity, there is scarcely a play of note that does not greatly offend in it: and it is a singular unhappiness, that things of this sort are used with more freedom on the stage than in the written plays. The players, as has often been complained of, to give more emphasis to their language, often go beyond the original, and exceed in wickedness, that they may be thought the better performers. The name of God is so often used, and bitter imprecations and curses so often expressed, that I know not how persons of the least degree of seriousness can bear with such impiety. And what is still worse, and tends to bring all religion into a mere jest, and bids defiance to every sentiment of devotion, is, that even prayers are sometimes made on the stage. This I have heard has been done in Charleston, but I am not certain of the fact. If it be true, it is a very high reproach to the place, that the theatre, where such an insult could be offered to the Supreme Being, and to an act of religon among the first of duties, is suffered to remain open. Can that have any pretensions

to be a school of virtue, where mankind are prompted to the highest acts of irreligion by open example? It is too grossly absurd to impose on any man of common understanding, and who is instructed only in the first principles of morality.

Shakespeare, indeed, for which I am very sorry, has offended in both the aforementioned particulars; but he was swayed by the taste of the time in which he lived. Queen Elizabeth, it is said, was much addicted to swearing, and was not over nice in the article of modesty; and from Shakespeare's error, almost every succeeding play writer has fallen into the custom of indelicate and profane language. Congreve, in particular, has offended to the greatest excess, and has done more to corrupt the taste and manners of England, than perhaps any other writer.

I will conclude this paper, by laying it down as a general rule, that the suffering either indelicacy or profanity on the stage, as certainly indicates the irreligious character of a people, as any other thing whatsoever.

SYLVANUS.

January 18, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. V.

I RESUME the subjects of indelicacy and profanity, touched on in my last.

A regard to purity of sentiment and reverence to God, does certainly form the basis of virtue and religion. To offend in either of these, is to violate a principle of essential importance to human happiness: and if the stage be so exceptionable, as it certainly is, with regard to both, it is undeserving of the countenance of civilized, and especially of christian communities.

A sentiment exhibited in public, has a very different effect from being read in private. If it hits the popular taste, which both indecency and profanity too commonly do, it is propagated by sympathy from one to another, and the effect of being generally agreeable makes a deeper impression on each individual: so that, what perhaps might have been read in private without injury, by being produced in public, becomes the incentive of depravity and vice. But what need have mankind of such provocatives? Is not depravity strong enough in each individual, without the aid of the approbation and example of others? Certainly it is: and whatever tends to foster our natural propensity to vice, must deserve the strongest reprobation, and ought to be discouraged by every one who is a true friend to human happiness.

Had such indecencies as frequently appear on the English stage, been brought on the Grecian or Roman, in their best and most virtuous times, they would have been instantly condemned, and both the players and authors proscribed from appearing again.

On the whole, the entertainments of the theatre, so frequently and so greatly offending against good manners and religion, are extremely improper and every way injurious.

I dismiss this article, which might have been treated at a much greater length, and proceed to remark

3. That another very material objection against the stage, is, that it is a temptation to people to spend more money on it, than they can well spare from other more necessary and indispensible demands. I have already mentioned three cases which demand our attention, before we can justly be at expence in amusements. These are, our just debts, charity to the poor, and our own comfortable subsistence. To neglect either of these for a trifling gratification, not at all necessary for us, is to violate some of the greatest obligations we can lie under: and yet how many are tempted to this criminality, by the amusements of the theatre! What is spent there by many a man, ought to be laid by for taking up a note or a bond which another has on him; and who, perhaps, is suffering

through want of necessaries, because his debtor is not as honest as he is fond of plays. It sometimes, perhaps often happens, that a man, even in the main honest, is so carried away by these entertainments, as to bear down the sense of justice to which his conscience prompts him, by the inclination to an indulgence which he has not resolution to overcome. This, I allow, is far from acquitting him of the guilt of wronging his neighbor, or abating his criminality; but it shews the pernicious tendency of amusements which induce men to such injustice. Besides, how many suffering poor are defrauded of relief by the taste for the stage! And how many might be fed and cloathed, that are incapable of procuring a subsistence, by what goes for the dissipating entertainments of a night!

I allow that every man, who can afford it, has an undoubted right to be at expence for his entertainments, so far as not to infringe on more necessary demands; and there are those who, while they give largely for their pleasure, may also give liberally to the poor: but this cannot be the case with but a very few who usually attend the theatre. The bulk are those who, after they have given others their due, have but a small remainder that can be spared from their necessities; and whether a part, or the whole of that, might not

be better applied than to amusement, every unprejudiced person may easily judge.

There is another consideration on the article of expence, of too much weight to be left unnoticed, and that is, that the stage offers a temptation to people in low circumstances, to give that for their amusement which ought to be laid out in procuring necessaries for themselves or families. I have heard, but will not vouch for the truth of the report, that some in Charleston have sold their corn-mills to purchase tickets for the play; and others laid out their last money at night for the same commodities, and been obliged the next morning, to borrow or beg provisions for their breakfast. This I can easily believe, because I have heard of the like folly in other places. Now, the evil is not only what such people may suffer, for their pleasure, but the temptation they are laid under to dishonest practices, for the sake of a seat in the play-house. Many are the complaints of this kind which have been made, in every place where the theatre has been permitted. Children have defrauded their parents, apprentices and servants their masters and mistresses, laborers and mechanics their employers, and others those who served them, of the price of their services, through the same temptation.

In reply to this, it may be said—If some stint themselves or families of necessaries, or defraud

others, or are guilty of any other mal-practices for sake of the theatre, the fault is not in that, but in them. They are undoubtedly in fault, and most so; but the theatre is not therefore blameless. It addresses to the weakness and depravity of mankind, and takes advantage of them for its own emolument, without offering any real good to weigh against the inconveniencies it occasions; and this circumstance is that alone which maintains it. In most places it is not supported principally by those who can well afford to pay for its entertainments: the majority are generally those who purchase them to the less or greater detriment of their circumstances.

If the theatre, then, holds out the temptation which occasions the evils above-mentioned, on a principle universally granted, that the fault first lies where the temptation to it originates, itself is first chargeable with all the ill consequences that follow it; and there is no source of argument to evade the conclusion.

Its advocates have often said, and they seem to value it as a very weighty argument in its behalf, "the best institutions are liable to be perverted and abused; and it is unfair to expect the stage to be without its inconveniencies, when every thing human is attended with them." This is very readily granted, but it makes not the least in favor of their cause; for they are first to prove that the

theatre is a good and useful institution. Let them do this, and the argument will stand against all objections. Let them shew that it is favorable to the real interest and happiness of mankind; that it is the friend and cherisher of sobriety, chastity, and religion; and that nothing is admitted on it contrary to these virtues and obligations; and the strongest objections to it will be fairly given up, and its character honorably fixed. But, if it is to have no countenance till these things be made good, I believe the managers may as well pull it down at once and sell the materials, to be converted to more necessary purposes, and the players look out for some more commendable and useful occupation.

That we may allow the theatre the utmost it can claim, I will cite a sentence of Mr. Addison, which is as respectful as any thing ever said in its favor—"The stage might be made a perpetual source of the most noble and useful entertainments, were it under proper regulations."

But this sentence, on first sight so much in its favor, inflicts on its reputation a deep and incurable wound. It was, in his time, under as good regulations as in any period of its existence in the British nation; and yet it was then so bad, as to give just cause of complaint; and the words fairly imply, that, as it then stood, it was not a source of noble and useful entertainment. What

regulations it would require to make it such, it is unnecessary to conjecture, and I believe have never yet been devised. However, the first, I should suppose, would be, to make it at least consistent with decency and religion. But if such a regulation was to take place, I am ready to think, many both of the performers and spectators would forsake it, because the last would lose their principal entertainment, and the others their emolument. It is, however, quite trifling to say, "if it were under good regulations": it has existed at least near three thousand years, and was so bad in the time of Socrates, that by turning him into ridicule, it cost the best man in the heathen world his life. If it has been constantly encouraged, and constantly complained of as corrupt and vicious, I think there is little reason to expect it will ever be under such regulations, as to make it what it is said it might be. I know of no other practicable way of making it such. than by converting it into a school of science, or languages, or a military school, or any other school conducive to the good of society. Let it, indeed, be almost any thing but what it really is, and its condition would be mended.

I have now, as an act of justice, produced the best arguments, or rather sayings, that those best acquainted with its true character, have advanced on its behalf; and the very utmost that can be

allowed to it, is; that it might possibly be better regulated, and answer better purposes than it can do in its present state. But as it seems merely ideal to think of its being better regulated, its advocates must abandon argument in its favor, and repair to the only post they can maintain, and that is, They have the taste of mankind on their side; and be that ever so wrong, it will probably support the stage, and every other institution that favors human depravity, till virtue and religion come into general respect, and till the popular taste for entertainment be by them refined from its present grossness and impurity; then the stage will, no doubt, be brought under proper regulations, or rather, it will be abolished.

Immediately after the sentence on Socrates, I intended to introduce the following remarks from Rollin's ancient history of the Greeks; but, by an interruption, it then slipped my memory.—Speaking of their music and dancing, he says,

"Voluptuousness and sensual pleasure were the sole arbiters consulted in the uses made of both, and the theatre became a school of every kind of vice."

He adds from Plutarch, speaking of public dancing, "being made subservient to low taste and sensuality, by their aid it exercised a kind of tyrannical power in the theatres, which were be-

come the public schools of criminal passions and gross vices, wherein no regard was had to reason."

These remarks, indeed, imply that the theatre had been in a better state than in the time referred to; but, as there have been very few periods since, in which the like complaints have not been made; and as they are still made in every place where a theatre is opened, it affords a very strong presumption, that there is something in the nature of its entertainments, that will not admit of such regulations as might render it consistent with virtue and the good of society.

In reply to what has been advanced on this unpleasant subject, I expect it will all be charged to want of taste, sourness, want of liberality of sentiment, and perhaps, other things of a more exceptionable nature; because this is the usual method with the advocates of the stage. But this very circumstance proves the badness of their cause, and that they are conscious it is incapable of being defended by argument. If they have virtue on their side, or rather, are on the side of virtue, let them fairly show it; and their opponents will be well pleased to see all their objections confuted, and will very gladly drop the contest. But, while they shun argument and facts, and shelter themselves in the mean refuge of ridicule and reproachful epithets, however this artifice may answer their purpose, the sober sense of man-

kind will ever contemn it, and pronounce their pretensions to favor virtue, good taste, and honor, to be vain and futile. They have ever had the sentiments of the greatest and best of men against them; and it will require better arguments than they have ever yet advanced, to remove an objection against the stage, of so much weight and dignity.

SYLVANUS.

January 20, 1794.

ANECDOTE OF THE ATHENIAN STAGE.

TIMOTHEUS, the famous musician, having represented Diana on the stage transported with folly, fury, and rage; one of the spectators, exasperated by such an irreligious act, wished his (Timotheus's daughter) might be such an one.

S.

Sylvanus—on Public Amusements—No. VI.

A LITTLE to relieve myself and readers from the irksomeness of examining the stage, I shall attempt, in this paper, a short consideration of the question, Whether public amusements of any kind are necessary or convenient?—By public amusements I mean those which are open to the community at large, whether expensive or not, as the

terms on which they are conducted may happen to be.

The question, therefore, does not include those which are enjoyed by select parties and assemblies, which may, in many cases, according to the nature of them, be rational and useful. Neither does it intend those public festivities which are observed, in order to commemorate events of a public nature, to inspire a love of the common interest, and to cement the minds of the people in support of the general good. These, indeed, are seldom free from inconveniences; but if they are, in the main, of public utility, they may justly be encouraged.

I speak of those public assemblies only, which have nothing more for their object than the gratification of those who attend them, or the emolument of those who exhibit them.

Of this kind, whether plays, horse-racing, feats of horsemanship, or rope-dancing, though the two latter are much more innocent than the former, I think it may be said, they are neither necessary nor convenient. They are not necessary, because there are amusements enough of a private nature, to answer every intention for which either the busy or the idle can require them. If the proper, and indeed the only, design of amusements should be to relieve the mind or body from the pressure of care and employment, in order to restore its tone, and refit it for returning to the same, at a proper

time, with new vigor; this may certainly be done by various other methods than those of a public nature, and free from the inconveniences of the latter. I have already mentioned conversation, reading, music, walking, riding, or other exercises, as the case may require, for persons of different occupations, as sufficient for all the important purposes of recreation, and such as may be innocently practised; to which I might add two or three games of a private nature, particularly checks, which may answer persons of such active employments as do not require intense thought and study, and when used merely as a relief from business. I except every kind of game which is played for money, because in this case it becomes a trade, and one of the worst sort that can be practised.

It may be urged, that public amusements of one kind or another have been used by all nations, civilized as well as barbarous, in all ages. They have so: but if they have been, in some respects, necessary in some nations and ages, it will not follow that they are so in all.

At least two thousand years had elapsed, before there was any kind of current writing for the instruction and entertainment of mankind: hieroglyphics alone, which were very confined in their use, were the means of public information. 'Till the invention of printing, which was not four hundred years ago, the body even of the most civiliz-

ed nations where in want of the chief means of rational entertainment. Public news, the knowledge of past events, science, and whatever else was of general import, could be learned only in their public assemblies. In these, they were informed of every thing that concerned the public cause; their principal acts of religion were there performed; their victories were celebrated, and their enterprizes of war proclaimed. They had besides, 'till the times of the Greeks, but few arts to occupy them in private, because their necessities were few, and therefore easily supplied. As late as the time of Demosthenes, we find the people of Athens indolent, and intent upon news, and therefore constantly assembling together for information to keep up their attention. A great part of the eastern people were still in a worse condition, and therefore in all of them public assembles, either stated or occasional, were quite requisite in order to keep them employed, and in a state of union. But besides this, most of them were almost continually exposed to wars, and a great part of their public amusements was intended to acquaint them with military exercises, and to qualify them for defending the public. Their theatres, racing, wrestling, boxing, music and dancing, were all considered as exercises of public utility, and not matters of mere amusement. And it was principally with a view to the common good, that their legis-

lators instituted public games and that their principal characters frequented them, and even took a part in performing them.

So far as they were founded on this principle, they were wise and commendable.

But we are under no such necessity now. We have not only abundant means of employment and entertainment in private, but also of information in what concerns the public good. The press supplies us with the knowledge of past events, of whatever is transacting in the most distant parts of the world, as well as the constitution of their governments, their customs and manners, their virtues and vices. It informs us of new improvements in arts and sciences, and whatever can gratify our taste for novelty, or our love for solid improvement.

Besides, our wants are now so multiplied, and arts and occupations, so increased, that few men need be idle, or without rational entertainment, if they wish to enjoy it, without going to public assemblies. I can therefore see no kind of necessity for public entertainments, nor any advantage from them, unless where something of a public nature may make them of importance.

To celebrate our independence, to commemorate the captures of Burgoyne and Cornwallis and other successes obtained in the late war, may, I think, very well deserve the public attention, and

some public festivity, as calculated to cement our union, and preserve a due regard to the common interest. But these are very different from public assemblies for the purpose merely of pleasure and dissipation. Besides, where there is a necessity of recreation, and of that sort which depends on company, persons of any degree of refinement may certainly enjoy it much better in a small party, where there is more composure and sociability, than in large and mixed assemblies, which are very unfavorable to both. Small companies for free conversation, for music, for discussing subjects of history, philosophy, or other branches of knowledge, which, while they recreate and improve, serve also to promote friendship and refinement of manners, would in every respect be far superior to passing two or three hours in a croud of all characters, without any solid recompense for the time that is there spent, and many unpleasant circumstances that unavoidably attend large and promiscuous assemblies. One room fitted up in Charleston as a museum, furnished with good paintings and engravings, with natural curiosities models of ingenious and useful mechanism, and a small apparatus for the more entertaining experiments in natural philosophy, would do more in one year towards improving the taste and manners of the citizens, than the circus, the race ground, and the theatre, in a whole age. And if

a few gentlemen of taste and property would engage in such an institution, they would render an important service to the place, and well merit the thanks of all virtuous and good men. It would indeed require time and some money to bring it forword; but when once open it would soon refund the expense to the institutors, and the profits afterwards would go towards carrying it on.

This leads me, by way of contrast, to remark on some of the inconveniences that attend public amusements, particularly those which are here the subjects of my censure.

They draw together a promiscuous multitude, without any laws to confine them within the bounds of decency and good manners. The public games of the ancients were appointed by public authority, and every thing belonging to them was regulated by laws made for the purpose. And though indecent and vicious sentiments were, in process of time, admitted on the stage; in other respects their assemblies were conducted with decorum. I except the feasts of Bacchus, which had excess for their object, and were under no laws. This indeed, was an adventitious abuse; for at first they were religious. The evil above mentioned is the greater, as the amusement is more public, and therefore the race-ground is liable to more disorder than the theatre, where the spectators are fewer and more confined. But, even this is sub-

ject to great confusion, and even riots, which have frequently happened in the best theatres of London, to mention no others.

Another inconvenience is, that the more public kind are a great impediment to the necessary employments of the people. They draw youth from their schools, mechanics from their shops merchants from their counters, and servants from their proper duties; so that during the time of some of them, particularly the races, there is almost an entire stagnation of business in the city. And I believe there have been instances when the legislators of the state have adjourned for two or three days, to see this wonderful and edfying spectacle.

Had it been to see a fine African lion, or the the city of Jerusalem in miniature, or a stuffed skin of the man of the woods, I should think it more excusable, because it would have been innocent in itself, though quite unbecoming an assembly of the state.

During the time of the races, I believe the race-ground is a scene, not only of dissipation, but of gross vice; and after they are over, it is some time before the inhabitants seem to recover their serenity, just as the sea takes some considerable time to subside, after a storm, or severe gale of wind.

As to the inconveniences of the stage, I have already taken notice of them. For the circus, rope-dancing, and tricks of hand, they are more trifling than criminal: and I will only say, at present that they promise nothing but the amusement of the moment; and it is a pity that men capable of such agility were not employed in something more reputable, and useful to society.

I close this paper with observing, that, as a christian community, these amusements are unbecoming; as a commercial people, they are an impediment to our business; and that, with respect to them, we are in a worse state than the ancients, who regulated them by public laws, to make them conducive to the common good.

SYLVANUS.

January 25, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. VII.

"*Why censure the Stage?*"

IF it were really, what its advocates pretend it is, a place of innocent amusement, elegant entertainment, a school of virtue, &c. &c. it would be entitled to encouragement and respect. But how far it deserves any of these encomiums, might easily be made appear, from the general character and quality of its exhibitions.

A large collection might be made from the most popular plays, particularly the prologues, epilogues and songs, of sentiments, allusions, inuendoes, &c. &c. which would fully display its true character and tendency, and show how far it has a claim to the patronage of a christian community.

But such a task would be so unpleasant, that I believe few men of sensibility would be willing to undertake it. However, as I have already gone so far into this subject, I may now and then select some choice specimen of this sort, to show how far our sentiments and taste are likely to be improved by the stage.

For the present, I offer my readers a short comment on a song called, "Washington's Council," (for what reason I cannot possibly imagine) sung at the late opening of the theatre in Charleston, said to be "written and composed" by the person who sung it; and which may be seen in the Columbian Herald of the 24th ult.

On the general character of this performance, I remark, that it is a mere jumble of words, some of them without any distinct meaning, so far as I can discern, gathered up from some old Bacchanal songs, without the least indication of taste or judgment in the compilation.

The managers must have thought very meanly of the spectators, to present them with such a gross farrago; or rather, as it is their professed business

to be "caterers" for the public amusement, they must have thought it a rare performance; and such undoubtedly it is.

This delicate song begins very worthy of the stage—

"Ye good fellows all, Care's an arrant old ass"---

An arrant old ass—Very old indeed it is: for, from the beginning of the world, all honest and good men very much respected it, as an indispensable duty, and very necessary for every man who would wish to fulfil his obligations to society, and answer the ends of his destination, in a reputable and useful employment; and in the same light will it ever be viewed by all men of thought and principle. To divest our minds of all serious care, and resign ourselves to frolic and dissipation, (tho' it extremely well answers the purposes of the theatre) is to sink below the instinct of mere animals, many species of which are not only exceedingly careful for the present, but discover the most provident attention to the future. He is therefore worse than asinine, who cannot drudge on, patient and steady, in any road of honest care, which his necessities, or his obligations to society, may require.

The sentiment, then, is equally foolish and pernicious; and its effects in both these views are obvious to the slightest observation. It seduces

young men from their employments, and often from the prospect of a comfortable, if not an affluent living, into scenes of dissipation, which ends in penury and infamy. It leads the poor into idleness, and the rich into extravagance: fills the streets of opulent cities with strollers and beggars, public houses with gamesters and swindlers, and jails with debtors and criminals. It betrays men into deliberate breaches of the most important trusts, and other acts of injustice and dishonor, which cut asunder the strongest bonds of society.

In short, it is this loose and pernicious sentiment which supplies the theatre with performers, and draws to it numbers of spectators, whose circumstances would, in justice, require them otherwise to dispose of what they expend on amusement, to their own detriment and that of society.

With the good leave, then, of this poetical player, and of all other poets and players, it is not quite so asinine to take a little serious care, both for this life and another. Cast this aside, and take every indulgence to which impetuous passion and the players would prompt us, and the result must necessarily be, what we too often see it, want, neglect, infamy, and an hopeless exit from the world.

This, however, is the constant maxim of the stage, from which it is propagated through all ranks of society, and, like a deadly potion sweet-

ened with honey, becomes the bane of multitudes, who at least curse, in the bitterness of their hearts, the maxims and the school where it is dictated. It is the case with many a man who utters the senseless thought, that, at the very moment while he is expressing it, his bosom is secretly torn with anguish ; and the more careless he would affect to be, the more strongly you may suspect him of being unhappy: and universally it is true, that the more men pretend to be without care, the more it is inwardly corroding them—"A face of pleasure, but an heart of pain." By this forced, but unavailing artifice, they would pass themselves on the world for men of great contentment, while they are farther from it than most other men.

The celebrated and excellent colonel Gardiner, who was, from the goodness of his constitution, and the strength of his passions, capable of the highest degree of those pleasures which arise from animal indulgence, has left it on record, that in the gayest circle of his companions, and in the highest scenes of revelry, on seeing a dog come into the room, he often inwardly groaned, and said to himself, "O that I were that dog!" See his life, by Dr. Doddridge. And I have not the least doubt, that something like this often passes in the minds of those who profess to have no care, and would recommend the same state of mind to others. The most contented and happy of mankind, are they

whose time is closely occupied with honest and virtuous cares, which allow them the fewest intervals for hurtful dissipation.

But let us see how the thought is improved in the next line—

"Avaunt with his methodist face!"—

This is in the genuine spirit of the stage. All serious care, all appearances of sobriety, all characters and officers, and all religious persuasions, are occasionally held up as objects of ridicule and contempt, to countenance and support the theatre.

But let us see where the *edg'd tool** this poet is playing with, will cut. A methodist, as a member of a religious community, has the same natural right to the protection and privileges of society, as any other man; and our constitution and laws put him precisely on the same footing with every other subject of the government: whereas players, as such, are not provided for by it, nor permitted to live under it, but by adventitious laws for the purpose made. In many places they are prohibited by severe penalties, under descriptions which, out of mere compassion to them as men, I forbear to mention: and with respect to the theatre of Charleston, it stands on the precarious ground of

* "Believe me, they're fools,
"That play with edg'd tools".
Epistle of the Disciple of Thalia.

mere indulgence, by the temporary repeal of a law expressly made against such houses. How far that indulgence was well judged, may be inferred from the gross liberties the performers have taken with people and offices, expressly protected and honored by the constitution itself.

The poet, like a true disciple of Thalia, advances in his invectives against care and seriousness. After calling it an ass, with a methodist face, he very judiciously drowns it in a glass, to prepare the way for mirth. This is done with great address: for the mirth of the theatre is generally such, as to require that care should first be drowned, or otherwise put out of the way, before it can take place.

"And let mirth take the puritan's place."

In this line too, the poet preserves the true spirit and character of the stage. Puritan is a word very familiar with the theatre, and used with the same intention as other words of a serious import: but take notice with what propriety it is treated with contempt. Among the first men in England who were called by this contemptuous name, in order to fix on them the brand of false pretensions, were two thousand ministers of the established church, who refused to comply with the act of uniformity, and subscribe with an oath, "that it is not lawful on any pretence whatever,

to take up arms against the king." For this refusal, they were rejected from their office and livings, and thrown into jails and dungeons, where a great part of them perished with cold and hunger, leaving their families to hopeless penury and reproach. Mr. Locke, speaking of this affair, says, that "Bartholomew's day (the day on which they were ejected) was fatal to our church and religion, by throwing out of it a very great number of worthy, learned, pious, orthodox divines, who could not come up to the oath, and other things in that act." Maiz. Col.

This is another sample of that fixed dislike which the players entertain against all sober and religious characters. Wherever they find a word, however ignorant of its original meaning, or the propriety of its application, they use it with eagerness, to encourage in others the same licentious spirit by which themselves are actuated: for this is a main pillar on which the theatre is supported.

The Greeks took great liberties with the fabulous deities of the poets, and the popular superstitions: but no poet or player dared to meddle with the religion acknowledged and supported by public authority. Yet, in a christian community, the most trifling and licentious characters are permitted, with impunity, to turn into derision on the theatre, every thing which bears the name of seriousness.

I now dismiss the immoral parts of this performance, to make a remark or two, by way of relief from serious argument, on its elegancies. Among these, the following are the most distinguished.

"He that can't boast like a beacon of wit,
"Drown the laugh in a joke or a pun."

After the poet has mentioned a beacon, or light-house, which properly stands upon land, he naturally, and by way of contrast, thinks of water, which is very proper for drowning: then, if an actor is so unfortunate as not to "boast like a beacon of wit," that he may do something in character for the entertainment of the spectators, he must "drown a laugh in a joke or a pun."

This is quite a new species of drowning, the honor of inventing which belongs, I believe, exclusively, to the Charleston theatre.

"Like Anacreon of old, he's the myrtle's soft pow'r,
"Whilst the vine's purple branches still blend."

This is quite super-poetical, and secure, in its own inanity, may boldly defy the shafts of criticism.

"Let Americans bosoms with rapturous glow
"————Rend the skies."

An intense glow, indeed, which instead of melting the skies, violently rends them in pieces, as a thunderbolt the oak. What a glowing patriot!

"To be sad is the blockhead's endeavor."

To endeavor to be sad is what one would not easily think of, without the aid of an extraordinary poetical genius. Yet, this author, in his "rapturous effusions," has struck it out with great facility.

Take now together the moral and the poetical beauties of this song, and judge of the elegant entertainment with which the Charleston theatre is regaling and improving the public taste. What refinement of manners may we not expect from a theatre whose performers are capable of such productions!

SYLVANUS.

February 5, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. VIII.

An Expostulation with the Managers of Theatres.

THOSE of you who have read what has already been written against the theatre, under the signature of this paper, will probably, on first sight, treat it with contempt, if nothing worse. I am well contented you should treat it in any manner you please, only give it a fair and impartial perusal before you pass sentence upon it.

This, I am sensible, is asking a privilege for my paper, which I believe you seldom, if ever, grant to any thing that is, said or written against your occupation.

As men I am your friend, as players your adversary; but gentlemen of your erudition cannot be ignorant of the maxim of the Roman poet,* "that it is right to receive instruction even from an adversary." They who wish to act their parts well, on the great theatre of the world, can never be justly offended at such admonition as would assist them in this great design.

The object of this paper is to expostulate with you, a little, on the subject of your occupation, and which, you will give me the liberty of thinking, you very much need.

1. Then let me ask you, whether you think it agreeable to your destination, and worthy of the faculties you are endowed with as men, to spend your lives in an employment which consults merely the amusement of mankind? Were the sublime powers of reason, and the moral sense, bestowed on us for no higher purpose, than to contrive methods for sporting away life in a perpetual circle of gaiety and frolic? Or have you the exclusive privilege of departing from the order of the universe, and particularly from the established laws of the intelligent system?

* "Fas est et ab hoste doceri."

Does not every class of creatures that we are acquainted with appear to be serious in their kind, and intent on fulfilling the intentions of their nature, whether it be higher or lower in the scale of existence? And with respect to all of them, may we not form an idea of their destination, by their respective powers, so far as we are acquainted with them? We may; and judging of man by his superior endowments, we infer that his design in creation must be much more serious and important than to flutter continually, like a butterfly, from flower to flower, in quest of a momentary sweet, without any forecast or providence of the future.

And does not this thought often force itself upon you in the intervals of dissipation, and corrode you with secret anxiety, in the apprehension of terminating your career of vanity, and entering on an untried state, for which your present employment seems very illy adapted to prepare you? That I may suppose you men capable of reflection, I must believe it does.

Were the business of your profesSon merely useless to mankind, which of itself must be a very mortifying reflection, it would be less exceptionable; but, when you add to its inutility the injury it does, by promoting dissipation, depraving the moral sense, and thereby relaxing the strongest bonds of society, as well as counteracting the most necessary and direct means of human happiness,

I know not by what artifice you can keep yourselves easy, unless by stifling every dictate of sober reason and benevolence.

This may do for a time; but the hour must come when it will not succeed.

The lowest mechanic and laborer, whom you now despise as a poor and pitiable drudge, is entitled to infinitely more respect than you have any just claim to, because he is of use in supplying the real wants of society, whereas your occupation is in itself unnecessary; and, while it increases the imaginary and fictitious wants of men, it lessens their regard to those which are real and indispensible. This is the true character of your profession and its immediate tendency. If it be not, make it appear so, and it will be a very agreeable discovery to myself and many others. Will the applause you now gain, often when you least deserve it and generally from those who are the least capable of judging of the merit of your performances; will this give you any consolation, when you will be obliged to reflect, that you were ruining the innocence, or rather increasing the depravity and unhappiness of many, by the very things which, through your deception and their ignorance, gained their approbation? How far preferable is the obscurity of a cottage, with its innocence, to all the empty figure you make in your fictitous

characters; and in the noise, and generally ill-judged applause of a theatre.

I say ill-judged, because, on a moderate computation, there is not one in ten of the spectators that is capable of judging, with exactness, whether you do right or wrong. Poor, then, and miserable is the applause which you commonly obtain, at the price of the virtue of your spectators. I could instance, on this head, a most insignificant performance, on the Charleston theatre, which was said to be "encored repeatedly." I will not say, whether to the greater discredit of the performer or auditory: sufficiently, I think, to both.

But I pass from this, and ask you,

2. Whether in your sober moments you can reflect with approbation, on the indecencies you frequently introduce on the stage? Is not the sense of modesty, and a regard to purity of sentiment, as much an obligation as it is necessary to the happiness of society? And is it possible you should feel no remorse for that which may ruin the innocence of individuals, at the same time that it may destroy the peace of families? Is not that peculiar sensibility in the fair sex, equally their ornament and their guard, of the most essential moment to mankind? It certainly is; and to attempt to deprave or wound it, is to offer the highest injury to society. It is an act of hostility, for which, when it succeeds, no reparation can be made to the injured.

Besides, when you introduce on the stage any thing indelicate, be it ever so artfully couched, it implies a reflection on the female part of the spectators, which no woman of any sensibility ought to be supposed capable of enduring. It supposes them to be prepared to receive an attack on their delicacy, not only with patience, but approbation: a supposition which ought never to be made, with regard to that sex.

The examples of licentiousness in women, which have resulted from the theatre, must be known to every one acquainted with its history. I might mention recent instances of this sort, but choose to wave them; and shall only refer my readers to Mrs. Bellamy's account of her own life, as a specimen of what I am now speaking of. This, indeed, would not be sufficient of itself, to discredit the stage, if it were not too agreeable to its spirit and tendency; and if there were not something of the like kind, almost in every place where it obtains a permanent footing. But as this subject will not bear to be long dwelt upon, and out of respect to the female part of my readers, I will dismiss it for the present.

Allow me then to ask you,

3. By what artifice you can justify, to your own feelings and reflection, the many insults you offer on the stage, to that sense of religion which

is common to mankind, in a higher or lower degree, in every state of society?

When you introduce in your performances, hypocrisy. fanaticism, fanatical raving, "methodist face," puritan, and other terms which have been applied to religious characters, you cannot possibly evade the charge of aiming by them, to bring all seriousness into discredit, and to free mankind from all the restraints which arise from a sense of their religious obligations.

And is not your design in this merely to keep up the influence and employment of the theatre?

But why would you encourage in others an irreligious temper, which is strong enough in every man, to make himself and others sufficiently unhappy, without the incentives you offer?

You must surely have rendered yourselves insensible to the first principles of moral obligation, and to all true benevolence to mankind, before you can thus deliberately pervert men from the only way of true happiness. Can such a part then give you any pleasure in reflection, and can you look forward to your exit from the world with complacency and composure, with the cheerful hope of future happiness, when you have passed your lives in assiduously endeavoring to render others incapable of it? You must then have drowned all serious thought, in the incessant gaiety of your oc-

cupation, before you can be guilty of such deliberate hostility to mankind.

When you have destroyed in others all sense of virtue and religion, can it yield you any pleasure to reflect, that you have frustrated the only principle that can abate the inevitable miseries of human life, and render our existence a blessing to us? I am certain it cannot, or I should be obliged to suppose that you had reached that degree of depravity, which is beyond the possibility of reformation—a thought which I should be very unwilling to entertain of any of mankind. But let me inform you, that the means you use to render men dissipated and vicious, do most assuredly lead to this result. Permit me to ask you—

4. When you inculcate on the theatre that care is stupid, assish, has a "methodist face," is a puritan, and treat it with other opprobious epithets as are familiar and almost peculiar to the theatre, what are your real intentions? Is it because your benevolence to mankind dictates to them the necessity of forcing themselves from all sober and careful thought, as the only means of attaining rational happiness? Or, is it not rather with the sole view of diverting the giddy and thoughtless, that they may spend the more time and money on your exhibitions, for your own emolument? This is undoubtedly your object, because so libertine a sentiment was never approved of as rational, or

convenient, by any man in his sober senses; nor ever uttered to the world, but by the impulse of unbridled passion, or of interest.

But is this acting a part worthy of your relation to society, which binds you by the strongest ties, to consult the good of men, rather than to injure them? It is altogether unworthy of your character, as men, and forfeits the privileges of society, as much as most other crimes which tend to disturb that order on which the happiness of it depends. And you cannot but know, that this is fairly implied in the many prohibitory laws which have been, from time to time, in many different places, enacted against the theatre.

When Gloucester offers his purse to Edgar, he says—

"Here, take this purse—
"———That I am wretched
"Makes thee the happier."

When you have gained disciples to the doctrines and manners of your school, and seduced many youthful and volatile persons, at the expence of their money, their time, and their innocence, which is still more valuable, into such a train of levity and dissipation, which may terminate in infamy and want, which has happened in innumerable instances by the influence of the theatre; must it not sting you with remorse, to think, that what made you happy for a time, was the oc-

casion of rendering them wretched, perhaps, forever? I do not, I cannot suppose that you directly aim at the injury of mankind: this is an aim, of which they alone are capable, who have become completely vicious and miserable. When innocence is violated, either by seduction or force, it is not with a view to make the subject wretched, but the perpetrator happy; and the same may be said of all the crimes committed against the happiness of mankind, except those which directly spring from malice. I charge you not with this: but if the arts you practise, and the sentiments and maxims you inculcate, have a direct tendency to injure mankind, can you exculpate yourselves from the charge of occasioning the injury? You cannot: and you are still the more blameable, that you assiduously endeavour to secure success to your doctrines, by recommending them to your pupils in the absence of reason; when the music, the scenery, and varied gaieties of the theatre, have displaced it from its station, and wrought up the passions to that state, which opens the heart to every pleasurable impression.

But will the benefits you obtain, by such means, console you, in the hour of reflection, for the dissipation and other consequent injuries you have occasioned? When youth are deploring the money and time they expended on your useless exhibitions, and parents are bewailing the misfor-

tunes which their children are suffering by the same means, from what source will you derive the "oblivious antidote," which can prevent you of remorse?

When lady Macbeth is uttering the ravings of her distracted and remorseful thoughts, walking in her sleep, she says—

"Here's the smell of blood still: all the perfumes of Arabia will not sweeten this little hand."—

When you reflect on the train of follies and vices you occasion to mankind, by what perfume will you be able to sweeten the bitterness of your thoughts? Nothing, I am persuaded, but the gaiety of the theatre, will be able to blunt the keen edge of your reflections. But, remember, that will not last for ever; your season of dissipation must end, and then reflection will come, against all the efforts you can make to prevent it.

I draw to a close. If I have advanced any thing against the theatre, that I cannot make good, show it. Come forth and defend yourselves, like men, on the open ground of argument, and scorn the usual weapons of the theatre, ridicule, banter and reproach: with men of understanding, such shifts will not do. If I have uttered, in any of my remarks on the theatre, any thing like invective, remember that itself first gave the provocation, by its attacks on all offices and characters. This,

indeed, is your usual way. My remarks are open to the world, and when opposed with candor, I will reply with the same temper: but if you employ any other methods to defend yourselves, they will be suffered to sleep undisturbed. As occasion offers, and leisure permits, I will continue my remarks.

I am the enemy of no class of men, though I may be of their occupations, when they appear to be inimical to the interests of society, which I am persuaded is the case with your's.

The only advice I offer you for the present, is, quit it for something more innocent and useful. Turn school-masters, if you are men of education; or merchants, planters, mechanics; or to any other business that may be of real use to society, and that may suit your talents and inclinations. Any honest occupation will be preferable to that you are now engaged in.

As the conclusion of this paper. I recommend to you the following lines of an author, as correct in his taste, as profound in his sentiments:—

"Reflect that life, like every other blessing,
"Derives its value from its use alone:
"Not for itself. but for a nobler end
"Th' Eternal gave it, and that end is virtue."

JOHNSON.

I am, with my usual signature,

SYLVANUS.

February 12th, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. IX.

THE PREACHER'S COUNSEL: OR,

SOLOMON'S ADVICE TO THE VOTARIES OF PLEASURE—Parodied.

Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thine heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes, &c.

Being very proper to be read and digested, as a preparation for the Theatre.

I.

COME, banish all care,
To the Play-house repair,
'Tis all the delight of the gay;
Nor reflection, nor thought,
Should so dearly be bought,
If the price be—a seat at the play.

II.

What a folly to think,
While we stand on a brink,
From whence we must quickly descend;
There's nor bottom nor shore,
Nor aught of us more,
When this our short destiny'll end.

III.

What's life, but a flow'r,
That blooms for an hour,
Then fades, ne'er its blush to resume?
O why then impair
Its perfume or its glare,
Since it hastens so fast to its doom!

IV.

Let the gay morn of youth,
By no serious truth,
Be clouded: before it be noon;
E'er it reaches mid-day,
It begins to decay,
And fleets on to sun-set too soon.

V.

What cares then corrode!
What sorrows forebode,
That the gloom of night thickens apace;
A night of despair,
Without planet or star,
Whose shadows no morning shall chase.

VI.

Come youth, then, come age,
Trip it gay to the stage,
There no "stupid maxims" intrude;
Nor reflection, nor care,
Are ever known there—
They belong to the grave and the rude.

VII.

There the pensive revive,
While their anguish they give
To the pleasure that bears them away;
There the sick become well,
And no longer tell
The disease that has made them its prey.

VIII.

There the gamester forgets
What he lost by his betts,
Or thinks he'll regain it to-morrow;
The debtors there pay
Off their bonds with a play,
And shake from their bosoms all sorrow.

IX.

Old age there regains,
For its languor and pains,
The ardor it felt in its prime;
Sees the spring bloom anew,
And believes it is true
There will be a reverse of its time.

X.

There the hungry are fed,
And the naked are clad,
By the joys which the moment bestows;
In pleasure's gay scenes,
They perceive the true means
Of relieving the sense of their woes.

XI.

There the high and the low
Full equality know—
Vain distinction is banish'd away;
There all tempers agree,
And all humours are free—
So great is the force of a play!

XII.

To the play then repair,
'Tis the Lethe of care,
Which it whelms in the spring-tide of joy;
There deep from the sight,
Let it perish out-right,
Life's pleasures no more to annoy.

This is the most certain and effectual method of dispatching all serious care: not by those vain expedients which serve only to suffocate it for a moment, and admit of its speedy recovery to life and vigor; but by fairly immersing it, at once, in the deep and dead water of the oblivious lake.

I might here close this paper, but cannot avoid remarking on the mutability of the human temper, which is capable of the most sudden transitions, without any apparent cause, from one extreme to another.

Of this, the concluding words of Solomon's address, are one of the most remarkable instances in the world.

After encouraging youth to give full scope to their inclinations in the gay round of human delights, without regard to reason, or any other consideration that might serve to check their ardor, he dashes the whole with a strange and frightful thought, very unsuitable to the taste of those who know no other end of life, than to enjoy it for its own sake, as far as it can be enjoyed.

——*But know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*

This is a sad reverse, and most dismal conclusion of a sentence so gay in the beginning, and so flattering to a pleasurable disposition. It is like one of those black and awful clouds, which sometimes suddenly spread a deep gloom over a serene and smiling morning, pouring down a cataract of rain, mingled with fiery lightnings and crashing thunders, "convulsing heaven and earth," and overwhelming the hearts of men with forebodings of the final overthrow of nature.

SYLVANUS.

February 24, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. X.

Great and mighty is the truth, and it will prevail.

My particular design in this paper is to examine an argument that has frequently been proposed in favor of the theatre, and which is, on first sight, as plausible as any thing advanced to that purpose. What I mean is, that some great and good men have written plays, and introduced them on the stage. Of these no one has been more frequently mentioned, or with more confidence, than Cato, by Mr. Addison. Of Mr. Addison's writings in general, no one can have a higher opinion than myself: but had he never written Cato, nor any other drama, I am of opinion that his substantial fame as a writer, had not been less by a single scruple. They scarcely bear the marks of being done by the same hand which wrote so many other excellent pieces. As to Cato in particular, it is a stiff, "heavy and declamatory drama," whose chief merit is the sentiments it contains in favor of liberty: and it was this circumstance principally that secured it the popularity it obtained when first brought upon the stage, which has continued, in some measure, to the present time. In point of *pathos* and *action*, one scene in Lear or Macbeth is worth the whole of it. "The loves of Juba and Marcia, of Portius and Lucia,

are vicious and insipid epilogues, debase the dignity, and destroy the unity of the fable." These are the words of as agreeable and candid a critic as I know of in the English language. *(See an essay on the genius and writings of Pope.)*

But supposing Cato, and many other plays, to be perfectly unexceptionable in their language and morals, what does this argue in favor of the theatre? I have never argued against the reading of good plays, more than any other good writings; but against bad plays, and an immoral and badly managed theatre. To these objects, the drift of my reasoning has been directed. To talk about a theatre under good regulations, and calculated to inculcate morality and virtue, is to talk about something merely in idea: for where is such a theatre, and where has it existed, without the reproach of injuring morality, rather than promoting it? But this is the sophistry of those who are fonder of the stage, than capable of defending it. They studiously avoid the only ground on which the subject is fairly to be discussed; and this very circumstance strongly evinces the badness of their cause. We must take the theatre as it now is and has generally been in every age since it was first opened. What it might be, by good regulations, is quite another question. Besides, it entirely overthrows the force of this argument, that such sentimental and moral plays, as Cato, &c. are

seldom brought on our common stages; and the reason evidently is, because they contain too much sentiment and too little action, as already remarked, to suit either the design of the managers, or the taste of the generality of those who frequent the theatre: or why are not Addison's, Young's, Rowe's and Thompson's dramatic pieces more frequently performed? Why are love comedies and trifling farces, which generally have little sentiment, and are very often exceedingly immoral, or, at the least, calculated only to divert for the moment, performed so much oftener? The reason is unquestionably this, that the chief object of the theatre is not to inculcate moral sentiment, but to amuse the audience. As a proof of this, I will only refer to the pieces which have been generally performed at the Charleston theatre, since it was first opened.

I have indeed seen Macbeth lately advertised; but, if I am not deceived in the information I have had, from good judges, it must have been tragically performed. That the Charleston theatre has some good singers, good musicians, and a great laugher, I have no doubt: but what are these to the performance of a good tragedy?

Besides, it appears to me a considerable objection against the supposed design of inculcating morality, and making good impressions on the minds of the audience, that the best tragedies are

frequently followed by an insipid epilogue and farce, calculated to erase every serious and valuable sentiment inculcated by it; and that, let the tragedy have been ever so deep, the audience must be sent away in as light and trifling a humor as possible. This is an absurdity that can never be vindicated, on the supposition that the theatre is designed to impress moral instruction: or why are not the audience suffered to go away with the good sentiments and affections they have felt? Will the advocates of the theatre fairly answer me this question?

Still farther, when the rules of morality are so frequently violated on the stage, and have been very flagrantly so on that of Charleston, it is perfectly vain and absurd to call it a school of virtue, and a place of rational entertainment. And I am well pleased to find, that, after all the charges of illiberality and invective, bestowed by the theatre and some of its retainers on my remarks, the truth has fairly come out as much in favor of my general argument as could be wished.

A writer, who signs himself a *Citizen*, in the City Gazette of Feb. 26, has, in a few lines, incontestibly fixed the heaviest charges I have bro't against the theatre. He indeed calls my remarks "fine-spun reasoning"; but, be it fine or coarse, he has not only confirmed the drift of it, but said even more than I have any where done: he has

charged the Charleston theatre with "downright obscenity," and I do not recollect to have said it ever went to such excess of indecency; but he has said it, and his testimony ought not to be questioned, because he professes to be an admirer of theatrical exhibitions.

This author further says, that, in conversation with the players on the subject of their unchastity on the stage, they vindicated themselves by saying, "the public taste was always consulted." The fact, then, of gross indelicacy is acknowledged; but the players charge it to the public taste. I ask, then, if they are not become my seconds in the debate, and, instead of confuting my charges against them and the public taste, have explicitly established them? Have I any where fixed a stronger stigma on it, than they have done? I think not: and I am glad to find myself, in a manner, left out of the controversy, by this acknowledgment, and that it now lies between the public and the players. There is certainly a gross fault some where; and, on which side soever it will finally be fixed, the substance of my remarks will be confirmed.

Here, then, is the opinion which the performers entertain of the people of Charleston; an opinion extremely discreditable to them, and what, I am sorry to find, seems to be supported by such strong reasons. The players, to make good their charge, have tried a comedy, called "The School

for Wives;" a very fine comedy indeed, by their own account: it may be so, for I do not know it. But, what was the result of their trial of a chaste and sentimential play? Why they had a very thin house. This seems an advice towards clearing themselves. The encomiast of the theatre, who, I have no doubt, belongs to it, seems not a little distressed that the taste of the managers in selecting it, and the singular excellence of the actors in performing it, should have been so poorly rewarded. It seems they intend to perform it again; and, if they should then be disappointed also, they will be under the necessity of returning to their old track, and endeavor to accommodate themselves to the public taste. This is a reflection of the greatest severity, and I am truly sorry that even the players have reason to make it.

All this, however, is a good beginning; and I am well pleased to find the players of Charleston, themselves, proselytes in some degree to my opinion of the theatre. There is, now, some little hope of a reformation, both in that and the public taste; and I most heartily wish it may speedily take place. But, I will say to them, as Shakespeare, in another view, "O, reform altogether!" There is, however, one bad presage; they must have their bread: and, if they cannot have a full house by chaste and virtuous plays, they must have it by those of a contrary character. But, is

it the part of virtuous men so far to comply with the vicious taste of mankind? Are these the conductors of a school of virtue, who have in view the rational entertainment and the happiness of men? It is too thin a pretext not to be seen through. Chaste or unchaste, moral or vicious, they are determined to please and amuse the public by something, be it what it may. But, does not this establish the charges I have exhibited against the managers themselves? It certainly does. If the public taste is bad and vicious, are they therefore to gratify it? By no means: be the consequence what it may, they are bound by ties, which cannot be violated with impunity, to adhere invariably to the rules of decorum, chastity and religion, in every performance. Let them do this, and they will not only so far merit the approbation of all virtuous and good men, but enjoy a satisfaction unspeakably preferable to that which they lately had, from throwing the audience into an immoderate fit of laughter, by introducing Sylvanus on the stage.

I am well pleased with that incident; it certainly did some honor to my remarks, by proving that the character of the theatre was truly hit upon by them. Were I applauded there, I should have reason to condemn myself. That was the second time I ever was within the walls of a theatre; but, it is probable, I shall several times yet make my appearance at that of Charleston, before

the present season be out. In the mean time, I shall, on two accounts, be very happy to see any promising appearances of a thorough reformation in the management of it: the one, that virtue and religion will then cease to be wounded and dishonored, and the moral sentiments of the people depraved: the other, that the performers themselves will become better citizens, and happier men.

I have not a wish to debar mankind of any rational and virtuous entertainment; for, to such I am a friend. Neither would I do the smallest injury even to the players, who are unfortunately engaged in an employment, in which they in effect acknowledge themselves, in some sort, obliged to be panders to the most corrupt and vicious taste of mankind, or be in danger of failing of a subsistence.

How much better to toil at the oar, or drag the net for a livelihood, than to gain it by means ruinous to themselves and others!

Let them jointly declare themselves on the side of morality, and a chaste and uncorrupted taste, by banishing from the stage every thing, both in sentiment and action, contrary to them, and they will find me among the first to pay them the tribute of due honor. But, while they continue to insult chastity and seriousness, I shall continue to hold them among the chief enemies of society.

The post I have occupied, from a sense of duty and good will to my fellow citizens, I will maintain against all the reproach of the theatre and its adherents, with a watchful eye on its exhibitions, till the reasons which have prompted me to this service, shall cease. With very sincere wishes for the improvement of the public taste, and the reformation and happiness of the players themselves, I am still

SYLVANUS.

P. S. It seems to me to argue a consciousness of want of excellence and public estimation, that the players of the Charleston theatre are obliged to commend their own performances. That their encomiast, who signs himself, or rather herself, at one time "A Correspondent," at another, "Five Hundred Citizens," and at another, "A Number of Citizens," belongs to the theatre, I cannot doubt. "Let another praise thee, and not thine own mouth." I am as ready as any person whatever to give due credit to the managers, for their design of giving a benefit towards the redemption of the unhappy captives among the Algerines: but, I hope they will not think that any act of humanity, however laudable, will cover the multitude of faults they commit on the stage; or that the public opinion will thereby be swayed to favor their present general conduct, as

players. I am far from saying, by this remark, that they have been prompted to this charity, by any other motive than the genuine dictates of humanity. It is the extreme of uncharitableness to ascribe a good action to any other than a good principle, where there are not strong reasons for suspecting it. I conclude this postscript with advising them to dismiss their present encomiast, and let their performances hereafter speak for themselves. S.

Sylvanus—No. XI.

An Address to Youth.

Attend, dear youth, the friendly muse,
Who calls you off from pleasure's train,
Would teach you when life's sweets to use,
And what to shun as light and vain.

By wise experience yet untaught,
What's good, what's ill, you cannot know;
Such knowledge only can be bought
By changes oft of joy and woe.

The first impulse that guides the human mind,
Is deep to drink of pleasure's smiling bowl;
To cast each serious, useful thought behind,
Nor think what int'rests the immortal soul.

In your fair blooming form a spirit dwells,
A ray etherial from the font of light;
At once your origin and end it tells,
Your rank how high, your faculities how bright.

From heav'n deriv'd, for heav'n again design'd,
Scorn not your destination so sublime;
For this alone, by virtue's pow'r refin'd,
You'll fitted be in this short course of time.

In pleasure's warm pursuit, ne'er pass the bound
Which heav'n and reason have for mortals fix'd;
Beneath the fragrant rose sharp thorns are found,
And ev'ry sweet is with a bitter mix'd.

Shun dissipation's gay and mazy road,
With whate'er sweets it flatters and allures;
Far, far it leads from pleasure's true abode,
And keen remorse, and pain, at last insures.

Close in its train, neglect, and want, and shame,
Are foll'wing seen, with sad and sullen gait:
While sober virtuous care leads on to fame,
And peace and plenty on its paths await.

The meteor that glides along the sky,
With dazzling gleam, quick-hasting to expire,
Nor guides with steady light the trav'ler's eye,
Nor warms him with a genial gladsome fire:

Such is the pleasure dissipation knows,
And e'er experienc'd by the giddy mind;
Quick from the strong-impressed sense it flows,
Nor leaves one deep or lasting trace behind.

In vice's beaten road—tho' thousands go,
Impell'd by custom, or by passion strong—
Tread not a step; or soon, or late, you'll know
How wide's the diff'rence between right & wrong.

One step there taken, it is hard to say
What force of reason can your feet recall;
'Tis always easier to shun the way
That leads to vice, than back from it to fall.

A thousand sweets kind heav'n has strew'd around,
And freely granted to our sober use;
In these alone true pleasure can be found,
While sure disgust attends on each abuse.

The lily, whitest of the garden train,
Whose leaves with richest odours too are fraught,
Will soonest suffocate th' impressed brain,
And fatal prove to both its sense and thought:*

* Confined in a close room, they are said to occasion sudden death to those who sleep by them; and many are incapable of smelling them long, without fainting.

While the fair rose, less laden with perfume,
Nor palls, nor satiates the wearied smell;
And when quite faded is its native bloom,
It still retains its virtue to regale:

So while the gayest, richest, sweets of sense
Will soonest pall and languish on the taste
It's temper'd joys will never give offence,
But still delight when others run to waste.

If, in your prime, your passions you restrain,
By piety's and reason's stable rules,
Of life you'll blunt each keen and needful pain,
And shun the anguish that awaits on fools.

Still, then, pursue the path which duty shows,
Whate'er reproach or toil attend it may;
In bliss, at last, you'll terminate your woes,
And see the regions of eternal day.

This is the affectionate wish of your true friend,

SYLVANUS.

March 7, 1794.

Sylvanus—on the Theatre—No. XII.

Don Juan, *or the* Libertine Destroyed.

The encomiast of the Charleston theatre informs us, that this is "one of the finest morals and grandest spectacles that ever was exhibited in any theatre. How far it is either the one or the other, is now to be examined.

First, it appears to me that the character of Don Juan is quite overdone. It is not in human nature to proceed to such extremity of wickedness, as he is represented to do, without fear, compunction, or any pause in the career of guilt, till the very end of life. The most hardened libertine, be his course of guilt what it may, or his passions ever so strong, is often checked by remorse, and the apprehension of punishment. In the impetuosity of passion, he may commit the most violent enormities, and this may be very often repeated; but there is something in the breast of every man, which, independent of the sense of responsibility to the supreme tribunal, fills him with both horror and fear, in the commission of crimes of such a nature as those of Don Juan. I have read the lives of a great many men, who went to the utmost limits of transgression: but I cannot recollect any one who had not his seasons of sober reflection, remorse, and purposes of amendment.

That Don Juan should have been so courageous in all the extraordinary and preternatural circumstances in which he is represented, is also, I apprehend, entirely unnatural. Great guilt, especially that of murder, is ever, I believe, accompanied with timidity, or rather great fearfulness. Shakespeare has therefore given us a much truer and more natural representation of a guilty mind, in Macbeth, after the murder he had committed.

In one place he says—"I am afraid to think what I have done; look on't again I cannot."

After that—"How is't with me, when every noise appals me!"

This is perfectly natural. These feelings appear to be implanted in our nature, as a guard against the commission of extraordinary crimes; and I do not think that any habit of guilt can entirely erase them.

The next thing in this extraordinary spectacle, is the equestrian statue. Singular as Don Juan's character is, this very far exceeds it. It is an animated statue, possessed of the powers both of motion and speech. It nods, walks, converses, invites to a banquet, and expostulates. I am surprized that Don Juan was not frightened out of his wits, at so preternatural a phenomenon: but it seems he had acquired extraordinary intrepidity, by the commission of extraordinary crimes.

But, does not such an appearance contradict all the rules of probability, and, instead of being awful and alarming, become perfectly ludicrous? Such exhibitions are not only against nature and reason, but they have a tendency to lessen our respect to truth and reality, and bias the mind into a love of mere chimeras.

A disturbed imagination, such as Don Quixote's, may imagine wind-mills armed cap-a-pee, ready for combat, and in such a case, it is excusable; the disorder is in the mind itself, not in nature: but when men set themselves to invent things that have no existence in any order of the universe, it is very highly absurd, and I think in some degree criminal.

How much more affecting and awful would have been the apparition of the murdered commandant, as coming from the invisible world, and being agreeable to a popular and national opinion!

From this wonderful statue we pass to remark on another very grand scene—"the fiery abyss, sudden flames of fire," &c.

In this representation, I think there is something more than impropriety—there is great temerity. The disposer of the universe has wisely and kindly concealed from us these awful scenes, and the most eager curiosity hardly wishes to pry into them. In description, the imagination may be allowed considerable liberty; but even in this case,

we ought to be very cautious and respectful, and to treat those solemn and undescribed subjects with great veneration.

To represent them by visible and material objects, and for our amusement too, is a liberty, I apprehend, we are not justified in taking, on any principles. The mind thereby acquires, insensibly, a levity in thinking and speaking on such subjects, that may prove extremely injurious to moral sentiment. A mind properly impressed with a sense of these most awful and interesting scenes, which are reserved for incorrigible sinners, can never think or speak of them without considerable terror.

In connection with this, we are presented with the furies. Who or what these persons are, would, I believe, puzzle the players themselves to tell us. On the Grecian or Roman stage they were proper enough, because they made a part of their mythology, and were agreeable to popular opinion: but what we have to do with them, who consider them as mere fictitious personages, I cannot conceive; nor what entertainment the representation of them can afford, in an assembly of people who acknowledge no such existences. In poetry they may do, but in representation they are ridiculous, and I should think offensive to a good taste. Besides, there is an evident impropriety in appearing as the executioners of divine

justice, which the furies are supposed to be. It is more than impropriety to intrude ourselves on such a service.

Next to the furies comes in Pluto, the most improper and exceptionable part of the spectacle. Pray what is Pluto, but an imaginary personage, who is here set in the place of the supreme judge of the universe, to determine the final condition of mankind? This is blending the serious and comic together in a most unnatural and improper manner, and turns the whole affair into a mere jest. The person who acted Pluto must have been as daring as Don Juan, and I think much more so. To sit as judge in such a case, is an argument of extreme levity, and want of sober consideration.

Having thus concisely examined the propriety of the representation, let us now enquire a little into the fine moral it conveys. Where it lies, I confess myself much at a loss to discover. Instead of being so good as we are told, I rather suspect it is of a quite contrary tendency: for, first, the representation itself is too ludicrous to make any serious impression. The only scene approaching to solemnity, is "the dismal cave, with monuments, bones," &c. and the expostulation that then takes place: but even this is quite spoiled by the statue.

We are told that Pluto would not pardon Don Juan, as a libertine destitute of pity; and this seems

to be the principal reason of his condemnation. This is a very dangerous sentiment. Many a humane and compassionate libertine meets with the same fate as Don Juan; nor will any degree of pity atone for other crimes, or screen the perpetrators of them from final punishment.

That such an incorrigible offender as Don Juan should be at last destroyed, is nothing more than what every man thinks just and right, and is therefore very far from being so remarkable fine a moral. Final misery is the natural and necessary consequence of such crimes, and of others of much less enormity. Here too, I think, there is a dangerous sentiment implied. It seems to insinuate that none but such monstrous offenders as Don Juan are in danger of meeting with his fate; and many a libertine, as well as others, is fond of cherishing the idea: and on this principle men are too apt to think themselves secure, while they confine themselves within the limits of passion and indulgence that do not directly injure others.

On the whole, both the grandeur and moral of this performance come down to, at least, a mere representation of things out of the order of nature, neither instructive nor conformable to truth, or the rules of good taste. How it was received I cannot tell, but should be sorry if so trifling a performance could please the people of Charleston.

SYLVANUS.

March 14, 1794.

Sylvanus—No. XIII.

An Address *to the* Public, *on* Public Amusements.

Fellow-Citizens,

The papers I have taken the liberty of laying before you, have been dictated by that good will which every citizen owes to the community in which he lives, and by which he enjoys the protection and other advantages of society. I can the more readily plead your indulgence, as none of my remarks have been aimed at any individual, or intended to expose any personal character; but made on as large a scale as the object I had in view would admit of. My design has been to expose our public amusements, as equally tending to deprave our taste and our morals, two things of very great consequence to us in every view. Our taste for entertainments has a closer connection with our manners, and a stronger influence upon them, than would readily be imagined. It has been for this reason that I have sometimes descended to more particularity in my remarks on the performances of the theatre, than was quite agreeable to my disposition. In the same degree as we acquire a refinement in our taste for pleasure, we shall probably improve in all our sentiments

and manners. On this principle, then, I shall continue this series of papers, so far as shall appear to me conducive to these ends.

Allowing that public amusements were, in the main, innocent and expedient, it appears to me a question that deserves serious consideration, *how far they are so in our circumstances?*

That they are not expedient, I argue from the following considerations.

1. It appears to me that we are yet too young to encourage them. It was near four hundred years from the building of Rome, before stage-plays were there performed. Other public games they had, but they were of a different character; and such was the public opinion of these entertainments, that the histriones, or stage-players, were never allowed the privilege of ranking in any tribe. Other marks of disrespect they were treated with, which every person well acquainted with the Roman antiquities must know. We are not yet full eighteen years of age, as an independent community, and yet we have not only these, but several others. Our great object in this early state should be to secure our independence on a large and permanent basis, and to establish a national character, as well as the prosperity of the union, by a manly spirit, to which all our public amusements are very unfavorable. If we become effeminate in our manners, and are carried away

by trifling entertainments, in so early a period of our existence, what may we expect to be in fifty or an hundred years hence?

2. We have not yet recovered from the effects of the late war with Britain. Many were thereby reduced from opulent to narrow circumstances; many, from competence to want; many rendered incapable of paying their just debts; and our taxes to defray the expences of that war considerably raised: so that, in what respects individuals and the community, many of us are in difficult situations. From these embarrassments we can be freed, only by a general spirit of industry and economy, to both of which public amusements of every kind are unfavorable.

3. Our frontiers are greatly harassed by a war with the savages. Multitudes of individuals and families have already been destroyed, with all the horrors of Indian barbarity; and multitudes are in continual jeopardy and alarm, abandoning their habitations, and the means of subsistence, and shut up in close stations, to preserve their lives. We have already lost the greatest part of one army in our defence, and another is now on the territory of the enemy, waiting, perhaps, the same fate.

By the feelings, then of humanity for our suffering brethren, and a concern for the public good, we are bound to cultivate a serious temper.

4. We have but lately recovered from the dread of public calamity, particularly of the disease which prevailed at Philadelphia, and was so fatal to that growing city.

What impressions that calamity made on the public mind may be judged of from the appointment of a day for fasting, humiliation and prayer, to intercede with God to avert it from us. It was perhaps, as solemn a day as was ever seen in South-Carolina. All ranks of people appeared to be strongly affected, and there was good reason for it. I am sorry, however, to say, that we seem quite to have forgotten it, and to think ourselves perfectly secure, by the present prevailing rage for dissipation.

A very good British writer informs us, that the next day after an earthquake in London, which threw the inhabitants into the greatest consternation, the bills were stuck up for the plays and horse-races—an indication of extreme levity indeed: but I do not think we fall very far short of it. We have as yet escaped; but I can see no reason for which we can justly hope to continue in our present situation.

For the size of Philadelphia, there is not, perhaps, a city in the world of more de ent manners, or that has more institutions of a public and useful nature, or where the public offices of religion are better attended: yet all these were no security.

And where, I pray, are the superior public virtues that we can plead, as a reason for exemption from public calamity? No people indeed, in the union, exceed us in politeness of manners, and hospitality to strangers: besides these, I do not know that we have any other distinguished merit, as a community. But, can we rely on these to screen us from the punishment of our vices? I think we cannot, without the greatest temerity. It is not in the order of Providence to commute with mankind, on the principle of allowing some virtues to balance against their vices. It is not the case with respect to individuals: a single vice destroys the worth of many virtues: and so it is with respect to communities.

It appears that some of the people of Philadelphia are apprehensive that the yellow fever may break out there again, this spring; and that the apprehension of being again visited by so terrible a calamity, has made very serious impressions on the minds of many. What reasons there may be for that apprehension, I cannot well judge; but if it should return there, it will, perhaps, be more difficult for us to guard against the contagion, than it was before—the principal reason of which opinion is, that our trade will probably be confined to fewer channels than usual, and we shall therefore be more intent on keeping that open. And should it please God to permit it to come among us, I

know not whether it will not be attended with more calamities than perhaps in any state of the union.

The very least inconvenience of it would be an entire suspension of our trade, with all nations, during its continuance. Whether we are prepared for such an event, I leave my fellow-citizens to judge. But, whether we are in particular danger or not, I think we ought not so soon to forget the deliverance we have already met with.

Our trade is at present very much cramped, and likely to be more so, if the present temper of the British ministry should continue. What change the successes of France, and the sense of the people may make, it is difficult to say; but certainly, nothing but hard necessity will alter the measures, either of the British court, or of any other court of Europe inimical to France and the progress of civil liberty.

The present struggle is, perhaps, the last that will ever be made for the support of tyranny. If it succeeds, despotism will probably maintain its ground for ages; if not, it is gone for ever.

Our own timidity, indeed, has provoked the wrongs and insults we have already suffered from that imperious nation; and to the same cause may be ascribed all that we yet have to suffer from it. Had we all along maintained the same spirit which gained our independence, we should now be on a footing so respectable as to deter the British. and

every other nation in the world, from attempting to infringe on our rights of sovereignty. Should Providence, however, intend to reduce us to the necessity of depending on our own resources, and break off, in a considerable measure, our intercourse with foreign nations—though it would probably, in the end, turn out greatly to our advantage—it will bring all the virtue and resolution we are possessed of to a severer trial than we have yet experienced. We ought therefore to be prepared for the last extremity, by cultivating a firm and manly spirit, capable of the severest self-denial, for the common good; and especially, by that sobriety of manners which may give us some degree of confidence in the care and providence of God.

But, while the present taste for dissipation continues, and so many public amusements are encouraged and frequented we must unavoidably contract an effeminacy of spirit and manners, very illy suited to prepare us for the conflict to which we shall probably be called.

We have not a single public amusements of a nature suited to raise our minds to great and heroic actions, worthy of a people who have so lately acquired their independence. They have all rather a tendency to depress us into a pusillanimity, incapable of sustaining so great and important a struggle as that of fixing our rights and national character on a respectable footing, against

all the efforts of our enemies. Those of the theatre, I am persuaded, are of the most injurious nature to those sentiments and manners our present circumstances require. The representations of low life, with which our own in particular so much abounds, and which seem to be those only in which it is capable of making any figure, are extremely far from promoting a generosity and greatness of mind equal to public difficulties. It is not by low humor, or the representation of the common incidents of life, that the mind is made conversant with great sentiments, and prepared for great actions. As in real life scenes of low cunning, dissimulation, intrigue, and criminal amours, are always dangerous to those who are not possessed of a resolute and confirmed virtue, so it is in representation; and perhaps in this case more than in that, because, being intended merely to amuse and divert, the mind is, in a measure, put off its guard, and disposed to see and hear the most criminal or improper things with less disgust than they deserve: and this will especially happen to youth, whose want of experience, love of novelty, and impressible temper, render them liable to put a favorable construction on the most improper and da gerous things.

It would be easy to shew that most comedies are equally inconvenient, both with respect to a just taste and moral sentiment. This I may per-

haps, attempt in a separate paper hereafter. For the present I dismiss it, and pass to remark,

6. That the present crisis is, perhaps, the most serious and important that the world has ever seen, with respect to civil society. It appears as if the Supreme Ruler of the universe was about to shake all the nations of the earth with some extraordinary revolution in the state of civil government. Such a revolution must undoubtedly take place: for it cannot be thought that the present state of society is that which God originally intended.

We have seen an important and glorious revolution among ourselves; but, when compared to that of France, it seems to me as nothing. The scenes that are now acting in that country, and on its borders, are to the highest degree awful and interesting; the spectacle is grand beyond all description; and no attentive observer can view it without a mixture of admiration and terror. A great and celebrated nation, long inured to the chains of despotism, all at once shaking off their fetters, and struggling with unparalleled ardor and bravery against all Europe, is something so singular, that I think no language can describe it.

That France will succeed in this great conflict, I never had a doubt; and, what must be the consequence? All Europe will undoubtedly undergo a revolution; and, if such carnage as has already

taken place, was necessary for the deliverance of one nation, how great, in all probability, will that be, which will give freedom to all Europe and the world!

In the present prospect, the mind is held in awful suspense. Let us view it concisely. Almost all Europe in arms, and like to be deluged with blood: our own country in commotion, by the Indians on the west, the Spaniards on the south, the English government on the north: the British nation and their honorable allies, the Algerines, destroying our trade, and doing all they are capable of to ruin our prosperity and public happiness. Is there nothing, then, in all this to make us serious? If the present state of things cannot make us so, I know not what is sufficient to do it. We ourselves are not yet right; and have therefore good reason so expect a part in the general commotion of the world.

There is no nation upon earth that has not seen great and terrible calamity. I can see no reason why we should expect to escape. But these are painful ideas, which nothing could suggest, but a concern for our common happiness. Let us therefore endeavor to be prepared for the will of God. What is proper to be done in our present most interesting situation, I leave to your good sense to determine. I only advise to check the present excessive taste for public amusements,

and cultivate that seriousness of temper and public spirit which will best fit us for all events. A severe trial of all the virtue we can possess, is probably not far distant.

With the warmest wishes for your prosperity, I am, my fellow-citizens, your true friend,

SYLVANUS.

March 21st, 1794.

HINTS ON EDUCATION.

NUMBER I.

It must give particular pleasure to every lover of his country, and the common interests of society, to observe the spirit for improvements of public utility, which has for some time prevailed among the people of the United States. Never perhaps did any nation, unless we except France since the revolution, make the same advances in the same length of time, as America, since the establishment of her independence. Mechanics, medicine, agriculture and commerce, have been improved with very laudable zeal, and much beyond what might have been expected, amidst the difficulties in which the late war involved us; and it is to be hoped, that every thing conducive to the common prosperity and happiness, will be pushed forward with every practicable exertion.

But, while it is acknowledged that we have done exceedingly well, in the subjects above mentioned, and some others, there is one of very great importance, which has not yet engaged the public

attention, as particularly as its influence on the state of society might justly demand. What I mean, is, the subject of education.

We have, indeed, a considerable number of schools, in most parts of the union, for the instruction of our youth, both in languages and science; but, whether through the prejudices of the people at large, or the incompetency of the instructors, we have not improved in this particular, in any proportion to what has been made in other matters of public concern. As if the mode of education long ago adopted, were competent to every purpose, and incapable of reformation, we have gone uniformly on, in the same beaten track with our forefathers, without examining whether they were right or wrong.

By this blind veneration for preceding generations and habits, we pertinaciously retain their errors, and justly suffer the inconveniencies which arise from want of spirit or capacity to think for ourselves.

It is not my design to point out every thing which appears to me erroneous in our present mode of education; but to mention some of the principal, and propose the means of rectifying them. Nor do I think myself capable of doing this to great advantage; it will be a sufficient gratification, and fully answer my purpose, if the following hints may serve to bring forward the

subject to a fair and candid discussion, by those who are more capable of doing it justice.

The first subject that occurs, in my design, is that of the dead languages, by which I particularly mean the Latin and Greek. These have been usually considered as of essential consequence in a course of liberal learning, and looked upon as the very ground-work of accurate and useful science. How far they are entitled to so much consideration, is now to be examined.

On this subject two very different opinions have been advanced: the one is that which holds them of essential moment; the other, that which rejects them as entirely useless. I am inclined to take a middle course between these two extremes, neither thinking them every thing, nor as nothing. The time has been, when a doubt of the essential importance of Latin and Greek, and Aristotle, would have been looked upon nearly as criminal as a doubt respecting an essential article of the Christian faith; and there are, even now, some men who as readily doubt one's learning, for a scruple in the one case, as his orthodoxy for a scruple in the other. But we are not now to be intimidated from giving our opinion in the one case, or the other, by the prejudices of narrow and illiberal minds. The field of discussion is now open to all adventurers, and neither literature nor religion can suffer by free enquiry.

When and how far the Latin and Greek languages ought to make a part in a course of education, may, I think, be determined in a pretty narrow compass. If a boy have a prompt genius for language, that is, a good memory and ready imitation, and it is probable that, after finishing his course, they will be either necessary or considerably useful to his future occupation, he may be put to learn them, so far as these circumstances may require. On the contrary, if his memory be bad, if he has a strong aversion against learning them, or it is probable they will be of little or no use to him in his future station or business in society, I think it is highly preposterous to put him to them at all. What he may be able to acquire, will be at the expence of great labor and disgust; and, in the mean while, he will sacrifice that time which might be employed with pleasure and advantage, in acquiring other branches of knowledge suitable both to his genius and prospects.

It is in vain to attempt to force genius; and it is as unreasonable to waste the most important part of a short life, in learning, or trying to learn, that which, when learned, will be of little or no consequence. Neither life nor talents lie at our own discretion; and it is both duty and wisdom, to know well how they may both be applied to the most useful purposes, so far as Divine Providence may allot them to us. This is the first

branch of knowledge to be aimed at; and he is the happiest who best succeeds, both in gaining and applying it. The whole, both of this life and the future, depends immediately upon it.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. II.

To study languages merely, or principally for the sake of being reputed a linguist, is a trifling and unprofitable motive. The name of knowing more than other people, may gratify those who are incapable of substantial science; but will poorly repay the trouble and time employed in the acquisition.

So far as language is necessary for gaining or communicating useful knowledge, it is worthy of being acquired, and no farther.

On this principle, we may proceed to enquire how far the dead languages are entitled to our attention. If the most useful branches of knowledge are not to be acquired without them; or, if they are essentially necessary to the forming a good and correct taste in the ornamental and elegant arts, they are indeed of considerable moment; and no one can deserve the name of scholar, without having acquired them. Let us then see how far they are necessary, in either of these views.

For several centuries after the commencement of the Christian era, all the little learning that was in the world, was to be found chiefly, or entirely, in those languages; and, even as late as the last century, almost every subject of literature was discussed in the Latin, by the learned men in every nation of Europe. Theology, ethics, philosophy, medicine, and the liberal arts, were industriously concealed from common view, in that language. But the case is now very much altered; the avenues to science are open to every person acquainted with the English language, and of capacity and industry to make due advantage of them. All the ancient writers of considerable character are translated, with sufficient accuracy, to give us all the sentiments they contain, of real importance to be known. Besides which, I do not know of any subject of consequence, that has not been handled as well in English, as in the Greek or Roman languages. Most of them have undoubtedly been handled much better; and it is only ignorance or affectation, in my opinion, that can deny it.

In theology, the most useful and necessary of all branches of knowledge, there is not one of the ancients who will repay the reader for the trouble of perusing him; nay, who will afford any other advantage than that of knowing the great superiority of the Christian system, over that of the most enlightened nations of antiquity, and the necessity

of a special revelation to lead mankind to the true knowledge and worship of God. In ethics they have done something better; but even here, too, they are extremely defective; and one chapter in the New Testament contains more true morality than all they have ever written. I will add, that there is not a Christian of tolerable knowledge in the institutes of the gospel, who is not able to give a better account of the foundation and extent of moral obligation, than either Socrates, Plato, Seneca, or any other of the ancient moralists. In philosophy, taking the word at large, they have done scarcely any thing worthy the perusal of one who has read over the moderns of most general reputation on this subject. In astronomy and experimental physics, they are not of the least consequence; nay, he must be quite at a loss to know how to spend his time, and quite ignorant of the discoveries of the moderns, in our own language, who will spend a single hour in reading them on these subjects, unless it be with a view to mark the stages of knowledge in the past ages of the world, and the different nations who have made a figure in the progress of time. If we consider medicine, and the different branches connected with it, we may pass the same judgment on them, in these, as in the preceding subjects. The vast superiority of the moderns over them, in the knowledge of anatomy, and the circulation of the blood, as well as

chymistry, renders their writings on this subject of very little moment to a student of physic, in the present age. In short, he who would repair to Hippocrates and Galen, for medical knowledge, at this time, must infallibly lose his labor; and if he were to quote them as authorities in practice, he would justly be considered as a mere pedant, and worthy of being sent to school to learn the rudiments of his profession, rather than be allowed to prescribe. In oratory and philology, they have performed well; and he who wishes to be a critic in the theory of these subjects, may find some advantage from reading them. But, as to the latter, all that they have done will give no aid to the learning of our own language; the idiom of it is too remote from that of both Latin and Greek, to make these of any use in acquiring it. And as to oratory, I am of opinion, that nothing is to be found among them, superior to examples among ourselves and the French, in the course of the late revolutions. Their discourses, in many instances, bear the marks of great genius and spirit; but few of them can be of much use to a modern orator, who has before him examples better suited, both to the genius of our language and government.

On the whole, in any subject of real importance, though our curiosity may be gratified by reading them, our useful knowledge will be very little advanced: and this circumstance is un-

doubtedly the criterion by which we are to be determined in forming our judgment of their importance to us.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. III.

THE preceding remarks have been made in a general view of our subject; the following will be more particular, and serve to aid us in forming a decisive judgment upon it.

The professions in which the Latin and Greek languages have usually been considered of very great, if not indispensable importance, are these:

In the study and practice of medicine: if it should be said that they are not essential, or greatly useful in this subject, it might seem to imply a reflection on that excellent and useful science, in which they have generally been very much used. It is, indeed, to be regretted, that a science of so much utility to mankind, has been industriously concealed from common view, under the veil of these dead languages; and for no other apparent end, than to keep up the appearance of great mystery in the profession; when, in fact, all the useful knowledge in it, depends entirely on observation, and will be always best acquired by those who are most attentive to the appearances, or, in the medical style, to the symptoms of dis-

cases, and the medicines which have been found by experience the most effectual in relieving them.

It is, however, much to the honor of it's professors, that for at least fifty years past, it has been gradually putting off its Harlequin dress, and appearing in a garb, plain and comprehensible by common understandings.

Physicians of the greatest note have condescended, within that period, to speak and write a little like men who thought their profession of importance to be understood by those who are not so profoundly learned as themselves. In some of the latest and most useful medical books that the world has ever seen, a very great number of the useless and pedantic terms, formerly made use of, are laid aside, and plain English used in their room; and the consequence is, that people of common knowledge peruse them, without any fear of being concerned in the crime of magic: and, if the whole of them were from this time to be rejected, I know not what inconvenience would arise, either to the world at large, or to physicians themselves.

Though a great number of the names of diseases, and the parts of the human body, are in Latin or Greek; I cannot conceive why mere English words would not answer equally well, to convey a just and clear idea of them. Supposing, instead of *recipe*, the word *give* was used; or for

cataplasm, plaister; for spasm, cramp; or for synochus, continual fever; and a thousand other instances: would the profession lose either of dignity, or utility? I am persuaded it would not. Besides, if these learned terms must be continued, there are medical lexicons, treatises, &c. in great plenty, in which the student may acquire, in the course of reading, all the words necessary to his purpose, without reading a classic author, or learning a single grammar rule. By this means the labor and time of three or four years at school, may be saved, for acquiring ideas, instead of mere words. In this way, the student will sooner gain the knowledge of his profession, and the world the benefit of it. If a young gentleman, indeed, should purpose to go to Edinburgh, for the honor of signing himself M. D. it will be necessary to publish a Latin thesis on some medical subject, before the university can declare him worthy of that honor. But, even in this case, he need be under no apprehension; as, for a small sum of money, he may readily avoid the labor of the Latin, if he can only make the English part himself. But, as people begin to think such forms of very little consequence, all this parade may be very well spared, and a young man may come forth as a practitioner, with as much credit to himself, and advantage to society, as if he had visited the peacefull and free shores of Great Britain.

In fine, it is a particular genius for the profession, and not either Latin or Greek, that will qualify him for appearing in it with honor and success. They may, therefore, very well be dispensed with, unless there be a particular taste for literature: even this will be more for embellishment, than utility, in the profession.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education.—No. IV.

IN the profession of the law, also, the Latin in particular has been generally thought of indispensable use. Formerly, indeed, in England, when all pleas were entered and enrolled in that language, it was necessary to learn it, so far, at least, as this particular use of it required. But, as we have no such custom in our courts, it is in this respect useless. Neither is much knowledge of it requisite for the reading of law-books. In them it is so far from being pure, that it is a mere technical language, interspersed with French, Norman and English latinized, making up a more barbarous style than is to be found in books on any other subject: and, such as it is, instead of requiring several years to learn so much of it as is necessary for a course of reading, Blackstone says, "it may be observed of the Law Latin, what the very ingenious sir John Davis observes of the Law

French, that it is so very easy to be learned, that the meanest wit that ever came to the study of the law doth come to understand it almost perfectly, in ten days, without a reader "

Indeed, in a more general view of jurisprudence, as a science, it may add to the reputation of a lawyer, to be able to quote the opinions of the Roman civilians, or of the more eminent among the moderns, who have written commentaries on the laws of particular countries, or discussed what is called the law of nations. But such authors are now rendered in a great measure useless, by writers in our own language, who have treated these subjects, to much better purpose, at least for our use. And if the English will furnish all the useful and practical knowledge that the profession requires, there can be no sufficient reason why a student of it should waste his time in reading Latin books, which, at the best, is more a matter of curiosity than real advantage. If, indeed, to the knowledge of his profession, he should be ambitious to add the character of a general scholar, the dead languages must necessarily be learned; but, as this will be merely for embellishment, I shall say nothing farther of it.

In theology, both the Latin and Greek are of considerable importance; but, I do not say of essential necessity. A divine who can read with accuracy the Greek Testament and Septuagint,

and occasionally look into the more eminent of the Fathers, as they are called, may with more confidence undertake to explain the scriptures, or cite when it may be necessary the opinions and customs of the primitive church, than one who is obliged in these cases to depend entirely on the sentiments of other men; and I will add, that, in these respects, he is entitled to more attention and confidence in his profession. Besides, so long as these languages are learned by men in other professions, it seems very advisable that every young man who has the study of divinity in view, should if possible, know so much of them as to be able to confute those sciolists, who, because they have a smattering in Latin and Greek, think themselves qualified to criticise the scriptures, and explain away the whole of Christianity. Every clergyman who lives in a place where this kind of literature is cultivated, will have frequent occasion to defend the cause of truth against adventurers in infidelity: and it will be much to his advantage, to be able to put in a claim to critical knowledge, at least, as good as that of his opponents. So far as classical knowledge serves only for ornament to a divine, I consider it of but little moment. Notwithstanding what has been said, I have no doubt, that, with proper capacity and diligence in reading the English, in which there is a very great number of writers on all points of divinity, there

may be sufficient knowledge acquired, for the highest ends of the profession, without the knowledge of any other language whatever; and this seems all that is necessary to be said on the merits and utility of Latin and Greek in this profession, and the others already mentioned.

If there be any other case in which they may be cultivated to advantage, it is where there is a particular genius and taste for literature, and circumstances competent to enable a young man to pursue it, without employing himself in any particular profession. A knowledge of them will enable him to diversify his reading, and keep up a literary intercourse with men of learning in other nations; and perhaps, also, serve to guard him against habits of dissipation, into which young men of genius and affluence are apt to be seduced, by the want of some steady and necessary employment.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. V.

IF a boy has no taste for learning the dead languages, let him be put to something else, in which he may be capable of laudable proficiency, with advantage to himself and society; in which case parents ought cheerfully to concur with the genius and inclination of their children, and not

vainly insist on their attempting what they will never succeed in: it is equally imprudent and untender. But if both capacity and inclination concur, then let them proceed; and such advantages as the knowledge of these languages affords, may reasonably be expected, if the teacher performs his part with judgment and integrity. His duty is to accommodate his method of instruction to the genius and temper of the learner, so as to advance him in the most easy and expeditious manner in the business before him. Language is but a preparation for knowledge; and therefore no more time should be spent in acquiring it, than may be necessary to enable the learner to apply it to this purpose.

This leads one to take notice of some errors, as they appear to me, in the usual method of teaching the dead languages. The first that occurs, is with respect to grammar. I do not oppose the teaching of grammar, which is very useful in its place; but strongly object against the time in which it is commonly introduced, which is at the first entrance on the language to be learned. This custom must proceed on the supposition that grammar is the foundation of language, which is undoubtedly a common opinion: but so far is this from being true, that it is merely a collection of observations on the language it is made for, and supposes it to be already acquired. If the

knowledge of grammar rules led on to the knowledge of a language, in as regular a train, and as certainly as first principles or propositions in geometry lead to certain conclusions, this method would be proper enough; and nothing more would be necessary for the learner, than a perfect knowledge of the grammar of any language, and the language itself might be easily acquired by mere dint of good reasoning. But reasoning is so far from having any thing to do in the matter, that the whole entirely depends on a good memory and prompt imitation. By these alone children learn to speak and read what is called their native language; and in the same manner, undoubtedly, the dead languages ought to be acquired, and no other.

When a language is already learned, then is the proper time to enter on grammar, and not before. I will sustain this sentiment by the authority of a writer of unquestionable weight in subjects of literature.

"In teaching a language, it is the universal practice to begin with grammar, and to do every thing by rule. I affirm this to be a most preposterous method. Grammar is contrived for men, not for children. Its natural place is between language and logic; it ought to close lectures on the former, and to be the first lecture on the latter. It is a gross deception, that language cannot be taught without rules."*

* Lord Kaime's loose hints, &c.

Instead of tormenting a boy for five or six months, with the dry and barren rules of a Latin or Greek grammar, at the very beginning of his course, let him be furnished with a good collection of single words, and phrases, comprehending what may be necessary to prepare him for entering on the reading of some plain and easy book, in which he ought to be continued, till he has completely mastered it. From that, let him be advanced to another of more various phraseology, and so on, till he is able to read the most useful authors in the language he is learning. This, in spight of prejudice, I am persuaded, is the most natural, and effectual method. At any time after the learner is able to read different authors, with tolerable ease and propriety, let him become acquainted with grammar, that he may be accurate in its peculiar idiom and construction. This method will, indeed, give the teacher a little more trouble than the common way; but, if he cannot submit to it, he ought to relinquish his profession.

Another error frequently committed in teaching these languages, is, to refuse the learner the use of translations. How men of understanding could have fallen into this impropriety, I cannot well discover. An unknown language is to be learned, only by changing or translating the words and phrases belonging to it, into that which is already known, and the more exactly and frequently

this is done, the sooner will that language be gained, whether it be living or dead.

To oblige a boy to sit down with a grammar and dictionary, to hammer out a long and intricate sentence, in Latin or Greek, before he has made any considerable progress, is insufferable and most unprofitable drudgery; and though he should be able to make out the order of the words, he will necessarily take them in their most literal meaning; which, considering the wide difference there is between the idioms of the Latin and Greek, and our own language, must, in a great variety of instances, be not only very inelegant, but quite ungrammatical. It is the duty of the teacher, either to go over the sentence himself, till the learner can translate it with propriety and spirit; or, which is much better, let him have the best translation that can be had lying before him, till he is fully master of his lesson. I have often known boys to be obliged to waste a whole day in learning two or three short sentences in a very plain author, by being refused every help but a dictionary; when, with a translation, they would have learned more than as many pages. Where a master has twenty or thirty boys under his care, it is impossible he can do them justice, without allowing them the use of translations at pleasure. Otherwise, with all his skill and diligence, and allowing them to possess ever so prompt a genius, their proficiency must

be slowly made, and with great irksomeness and labor.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. VI.

A third error in teaching the languages, is, the obliging the learner to handle, I do not say to read, more authors than are any way necessary for a competent proficiency at the grammar school. It cannot be presumed that an accurate knowledge of either Latin or Greek, much less of them both, can be acquired in the course of school reading: all that can be done there, in common, is, to initiate the learner into the rudiments of these languages, and to lay a foundation for him to proceed on, afterwards, at his leisure and convenience. A mastery in them, or even a tolerable facility in reading them, can be gained only by long and diligent application. This is especially the case with regard to the Greek, which very few learn to considerable correctness. Nor is it to be supposed, that the design of reading classic authors at school, is to acquire the sentiments or information contained in them. If this indeed, be the case, it is extremely injudicious, as a great part of those usually put into the hands of boys, are far above their years and capacities; and if it were even possible for them thoroughly to understand

what they read, they will not make amends for the time and labor expended on them, to the neglect of things of much higher importance.

Reading at a grammar school is with a view to language itself: when that is sufficiently acquired, then is the time to inculcate science. It is sufficient employment for the learner to render his author into good English, without puzzling himself with reflections and criticisms, which are the proper business of a more advanced stage of education.

If a language can be sufficiently learned at school, by reading three or four good authors, I can see no reason why the time of the scholar should be employed in doing a little at ten or a dozen. This, indeed, may favor the reputation of the teacher, and flatter parents with an high opinion of the genius and proficiency of their children; and these, I believe, are the principal ends to be answered by such a way of reading. To say that a boy has read, in the course of four or five years, Corderius, Erasmus, Eutropius, C. Nepos, Justin, Sallust, Cæsar, Ovid, Virgil, Horace, Juvenal, and perhaps half as many Greek authors, makes a considerable sound; and one would think such a boy must be quite a master of language, and a great critic. But this commonly is, *vox et præterea nihil;* and the only serious meaning in

it, is, that the boy has lost a great deal of precious time.

Instead of this pernicious parade of authors at a grammar school, I think I can name three or four which, if well read, will be more beneficial to the learner, at this stage of the business, than all the others, as they are commonly run over: I mean Eutropius, C. Nepos, that excellent collection called *Selectæ e Profanis*, and Cicero's Offices. He who can translate these with promptness and spirit, into clear and correct English, will, with very little trouble, be able to read any prose author in the language, and may immediately proceed to other studies—suppose the Roman antiquities, geography, the elements of chronology, arithmetic and geometry, as his genius and the judgment of the teacher may point out.

As to the Greek, the gospels and epistles of St. John, in the New Testament, and Xenophon's Cyropædia or Anabasis, will be sufficient for the course at the grammar school. If any other may be added, I would prefer select parts of what is called the Septuagint.

The particular advantage of limiting the learner to a few books, is evidently this, that, by going over them repeatedly, which he ought to do, till he can read them with as much ease and propriety as an author in his native language, his work becomes light and pleasant, and his progress pro-

portionably rapid. Nor is it an objection of any force, that, in his way, he is confined to a continual sameness of phraseology and style. The business of the learner, at this time, is to know the terms and construction of the language, which he may do sufficiently for his purpose, as well by reading three or four authors, as twenty. Attention to the peculiarities of style in different writers, must generally be delayed till the proper time for criticism, to which it properly belongs.

Connected with the error I have just considered, is that of introducing the poets at an earlier stage of classical learning, than boys can be supposed capable of reading them. Nothing appears to me more useless and unreasonable than this custom. Poetry is properly no distinct part of language, but merely an artificial arrangement of the terms of it, accompanied with the embellishments of figure. Language may be perfectly learned without ever reading a line of poetry. Besides, if it were ever so useful, there is not one in an hundred, possessed of a particular taste for reading it, much less of a talent for composing in it, which is a gift of nature, and not to be acquired. Even where it is bestowed, I believe it would generally be better to suppress, than encourage it. Farther, the reading of the poets is usually attended with an expence of labor and time, for which they very seldom recompence the learner.

The particular measure they write in must be learned, and every line scrupulously scanned by the rules of prosody, than which, to most readers, there is no exercise more irksome and insipid; and when it is done, there is nothing at all gained. Why this practice should be more necessary in reading the Latin and Greek poets, than the English, I am yet to learn; and yet it is very certain that the latter may be read to the best advantage, without knowing a single rule of prosody. If the poets were even as easily learned as the plainest prose writer, still there are very material objections against the most noted of them that are commonly read at schools. I speak now particularly of the Latin. Ovid's Metamorphoses are perfectly wild and extravagant, and serve only to fill the heads of boys with the most unnatural and unphilosophical notions, at the very time when they are most easily seduced from the love of truth and reality. If fiction is proper at all, at this period, it ought to be very sparingly used, and be at least reconcileable with probability. As for Horace, his general character is that of a loose epicurean, and he is often in the highest degree indelicate. But, if there were no objection against him in this respect, his pieces are generally finished in so high a strain of poetry, that it is most unreasonable to suppose boys capable of reading him to advantage, at a time when they have enough to do to

make out a tolerable literal translation, which must ever fall very far short of the spirit of the original. For the same reason Virgil is of no manner of use, at the time he is commonly introduced at school. If any part of him can be tolerably understood, it is his Eneid, as being narrative; but, instead of only five or six books, the whole of it should be read, that a general idea may be had of the construction of the poem; and when this is known, it is just of as much consequence, as to know the construction of Cæsar's bridge over the Rhine.

Many masters would have it believed, and parents generelly do believe, that boys are doing great things, and are quite adepts in the Latin, when they are advanced so far as to read these poets, especially Horace; and, if they could read them well, it would be really true; but it is on every side mere deception: they can be well read by none but proficients in literature. If a variety of authors be necessary at the grammar-school, those of history and biography are the easiest and most useful. Almost every one has some taste for books of this kind, and may less or more find advantage from reading them.

On the whole, if the poets must be read at all, in the course of education, the proper time is towards the close, when it may be supposed the language they write in, and other furniture neces-

sary for understanding them, have been previously pretty well acquired.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. VII.

THAT what has been advanced on the poets may not be considered as mere assertion, it is thought proper to examine the subject a little further, for sake of those who have not particularly attended to it. I grant to poetry, lively description, fine imagery, pathos and sublimity, and the advantage of impressing moral and religious sentiments with peculiar energy, where the taste of a good poet leads him to those subjects. But, as there are very few great poets, so there are very few good readers of poetry; that is, who can enter into the spirit of a fine composition so as to feel something as the author felt while he was about it: if they are not capable of this, they will read to little purpose.

It is mere assertion in Dryden, that none but a poet can be a judge of poetry; because there are many examples in the records of literature, to prove the countrary. But, so far as this must be granted, that, if any one who is not possessed of some natural taste and talent that way, ever becomes capable of just and accurate criticism in such composition, it must be by long and various

reading in works of literature, joined to a strong and correct judgment.

Of fifty boys at a grammar school, there is no doubt that each one will be able to translate, in a certain way, every author that is put into his hands, till he has run through the destined course, and is announced to the world as a classic scholar: but, their translations of the poets will generally be as much like the originals, as the outlines of a portrait are like the same, after it has received the last touch of the pencil. What a great genius may do, is not in question; such instances very rarely happen; and we are speaking only of the bulk of learners, to whom neither great talents, nor a fine taste, nor a capacity of extensive literature, are allotted, in the distributions of Providence, or necessary to their destination in life. And it is as much out of the order of nature to suppose that every boy at school should be capable of reading a Latin, Greek or an English poet, with discernment of its beauties, as that he should comprehend fluxions or conic sections, or be a correct judge of painting or music. Nature must as necessarily be consulted, and her inclinations followed, in a course of education, as in the pursuits of business: and her direction in the one case, or the other, cannot be opposed, without confusion and detriment.

Notwithstanding this reasoning, which I think is supported by unquestionable fact, I have heard

of teachers who professed such skill in their business, as to be able to teach boys to read the poets, in a year or two after their entrance on the Latin. But, to say the least, this appears to me a very random way of speaking. Let a teacher himself possess what ability he may, he cannot command the genius of his pupil; he must find it ready to his purpose, or all his skill and diligence, and fair promises, will turn out abortive.

If there be, within the city of Charleston, five boys, from the age of twelve to sixteen years, who are able, after from three to five years instruction at the Latin school, to read any one of the classic poets with correctness, ease and taste, I believe not one more can be added to the number. Nay if one such can be found, who is possessed of not more than a common genius, I will allow that the laboratory of a chymist may convert tin into silver, and copper into gold.

Shall I be permitted to ask those gentlemen who talk so familiarly of the great masters of ancient poetry, whether the same qualifications that will enable a boy to read the lives of Nepos, or the commentaries of Cæsar, will enable him to read, with equal propriety, the pastorals of Virgil, or the odes of Horace? Or, whether it is probable that he whose taste or curiosity has not prompted him, by either of the ages above mentioned, to read with attention some poet in his own language,

if it has fallen in his way, will be capable, in four or five years, of reading to any desirable purpose, the most finished poems, in a language he does not understand?

Let us suppose a boy, of the common run of genius, to hit on the following lines of Milton:—

" These oracles are dumb
" No voice or hideous hum,
" Runs thro' the arched roof, in words deceiving;
" No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
" Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell,
" In consecrated earth,
" And on the holy hearth,
" The Lares and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
" In urns and alters round
" A drear and dying sound
" Affrights the Flamines at their service quaint."*

What would he make of these solemn, airy images; or by what language could they be conveyed to his mind, if nature had not prepared a warm and impressible imagination to receive them? Without this, they can no more be distinctly conceived of, and felt, than cold iron can receive the lively impression of a seal. And yet, in almost every page of the ancient poets, there are images as far above the reach of a common genius, as these. Nor can they be understood, by any genius whatever, without a correct acquaintance with

* On the morning of Christ's nativity.

those parts of mythology, religion or philosophy, on which they are raised. I conclude this subject, with observing, that, while it is thought necessary to continue the use of the poets at school, the learner ought to be prepared for them, by reading some of the best in his own language, in which may be obtained all the pleasure and advantage that can be found in the poetry of any nation, or age, whatsoever.

ONESIMUS

Hints on Education—No. VIII.

As immediately connected with the poetry of the Greeks and Romans, we may spend a few thoughts on their Mythology. In this I include the whole system, or rather chaos of their religious opinions, as they are handed down to us, by their most celebrated poets.

To these there are allusions in almost every page of their writings, and many of their most brilliant passages are wholly composed of them. Indeed, if they were to be stripped of these figments, there would be little left in them for the entertainment of the fancy, or the use of modern poets. But, whatever embellishment they may give to composition, or scope to imagination, they grossly contradict the first principles, both of reason and religion; show, in a most convincing light,

how far it is possible for the human mind to be infatuated, in the full exercise of all its natural powers; and the necessity of revelation to teach the true knowledge of the one undivided cause, and most pure and beneficent ruler of the universe.

Instead of giving rational entertainment to a mind possessed of the love of truth and consistency, they must ever offend it; instead of aiding reason, they embarrass it; they disorder and stimulate the passions instead of calming them, and countenance vice rather than encourage virtue. In short, there can be little doubt, that the poets, by these fictions, have done more mischief to the world, than the rest of their writings have done good. Their bold figures, flights of fancy, and animated descriptions, cannot make amends for the representations they give of the disorderly and impetuous passions, the jealousies, the brawls, the intrigues, the cruelty and violence of those imaginary beings, whom they placed in the higher regions, as the directors of the world.

Cicero very justly blames Homer for ascribing the frailties and vices of mankind to the gods, instead of ascribing the virtues of the gods to men. And certainly, if fiction on this subject may be allowed at all, it is better to suppose a little too much in favor of human nature, than any thing which may sink our ideas of the supreme power:

yet, there is not one of their greatest poets, who has not given us reason to think, that several of their principal divinities, if they really existed, would be great nuisances to the universe. The fiction of Venus alone, has done irreparable injury to the morals of mankind; and were she really in being, it might well be wished that she had no concern with this part of the creation.*

Now, it appears to me as evident as any first principle in science, that nothing ought to be learned, in a course of education, that must necessarily be unlearned: and yet, this must be done with regard to the whole of the ancient mythology. There are two or three important truths to be picked out of it—that there is a supreme power—that he presides over the world, and that he is to be revered—all the rest is confusion and contradiction. It places Jupiter at the head of the universe; yet says he married his sister, and banished his father, after treating him with much greater violence.

Venus it calls the goddess of beauty, love and mirth; yet, she was the patroness of obscenity and licentious gratification.

Mercury was the god of eloquence, merchandize, &c.; at the same time a great knave, and the patron of thieves: he used to divert the celestials with telling them his tricks.

* See, in particular, the history of the Babylonians and Cyprians.

Vulcan, another of their divinities, but a more useful character than most of them, was born of the incestuous marriage of Jupiter and Juno; but, having displeased his father, he was kicked out of the celestial mansion, and fell upon the island of Lemnos, where he erected a foundery, forged thunder-bolts for his father, and taught the Lemnians to be blacksmiths.

This is a sample of the divinity of the Greek and Roman poets, and is quite of a piece with their other fables on this subject. Had they set themselves industriously to quench every ray of reason, and confound the universe, they could not have devised any thing more to their purpose. They were not, indeed, the inventors of this contemptible jargon; they had collected the materials of it, in a course of ages, from the Egyptians and Phenicians, but so perfectly distorted by the first Grecian poets, that not a trace of its original meaning remained, after they had given it a form agreeable to their warm and capricious imaginations.

May we not now ask, where is either the propriety or advantage of addressing such fables, so perfectly remote from all probability, to the minds of youth, at a time when they are just setting out in the pursuit of knowledge, are incapable of distinguishing fiction from reality, or truth from error, and more easily impressed by those things which amuse the fancy and stimulate the pas-

sions, than those which inform and strengthen the understanding? Can it be reasonable to embarrass the mind in its first enquiries, by presenting it with ideas which have no archetype in the nature of things, but are the mere vagaries of distempered fancy? If the road to useful science be plain and open before us, it seems to argue rather a strange way of thinking, to leave it, at our first setting out, to take a devious range through dark and intricate ways, where, at every step, we are bewildered and entangled, and our time lost. It does not seem sufficient to say, that maturity of judgment will correct those early misapprehensions, and recover the mind to the love of reality and truth. It is no easy matter to dispossess it of its first prejudices, by any force of reason that can be applied to it. With strong reluctance it breaks off its attachment to the airy images of fancy, however inconsistent with reason, or injurious to happiness. Of this we have abundant evidence, in the use which is constantly made, in our writings, conversation, and works of art, of the heathen divinities. We every day hear of Jupiter with his thunder-bolts, Venus with her charms and Cupids, and Mars with his arms and fury. We speak of them as seriously as if they really existed, and as frequently as if our language was too barren without them, to express our meaning. To say the least, the use of this artificial language is great trifling. If this were

all, there would be less to say against it. But, in many instances, it is used as the vehicle of ideas which corrupt our reason, and endanger our virtue. To talk of Jupiter as ruling the world, of Mars as conducting armies and battles, and of Minerva as inspiring wisdom, is irreligious. And to invoke Venus, or to allude to her in her most popular character, is indecent, and an offence to good manners; and it is grossly so, in painting, to degrade and prostitute that elegant and beautiful art, by representations of that divinity, or her intrigues, or any other of the lewd fictions of antiquity: and yet, unhappily for the artists and society, this is very frequently done, to the great entertainment of light and dissipated minds.

On the whole, it would be easy to show, by descending to particulars, that, instead of gaining any useful information, or any aids to our virtue, from the heathen mythology, we suffer considerable detriment; and this is likely to be so much the greater, as it is earlier addressed to the mind. While, therefore, we continue to use the poets in the early stages of education, our youth must necessarily be initiated into the mysteries of folly, it would be well to obviate, as far as possible, the inconveniencies they have a tendency to produce.

For this purpose, it should be the care of every teacher, as soon as the learner enters on the poets, to explain every particular in their mythology,

agreeable to its original meaning among the people who invented it; as well as the different forms it assumed, and the applications made of it, in different nations of the ancients; and this should always be done in such a manner as to impress a conviction of its absurdity, and the great utility of revelation and sound philosophy, which have rescued us from the errors and darkness of antiquity, when the human mind had no other guide than its own defective and erroneous reasoning.

I have known teachers so injudicious and imprudent, as to entertain their pupils with the absurdities of the ancient mythologies, as if they had been principles of sound and necessary science. Such impropriety has a very ill effect on the volatile and curious minds of young people. While the teacher treats such things in a way of jest and diversion, the learner will be sure to consider them as very interesting.

While it may be necessary, for sake of understanding the ancients, to give some account of these fictions, the teacher ought to guard the pupil against those passages which are most hazardous to his virtue. The least that can be said of them is, that they unprofitably consume a great deal of time.

If these hints should be continued to any length, I may probably give some specimens of the manner of explaining the ancient mythology.

In the mean time, I wish the subject may be seriously taken up, by all who are concerned in the education of youth. Custom may have taught us to consider it as but of little moment; but mature examination will set it in a very different light.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. IX.

INSTEAD of spending so much time as is usually devoted to learning a little of the Latin and Greek, I should think it much more useful to cultivate our own language. It is in this that we are to acquire and communicate all our practical knowledge, and transact the business of our respective stations and employments; it should therefore be the first part of education to learn it well. If the others, through veneration for antiquity, *must* be added, let them be allowed no more time than their real utility to us will justly demand, but not an hour to the prejudice of our own. Yet, it has been the common custom to treat those as things of the very first consequence, while this generally has been either entirely neglected, or only occasionally attended to, as a thing that must come of course, as naturally as children learn to walk, whether they are taught or not.

By this inversion of a just and natural order, I have frequently known young men, who had finished their course at college with the reputation of being good scholars, obliged to enter into some sphere of business, under the great and reproachable disadvantage of knowing very little of the language in which they were to discharge all the duties of it: whereas, had that been early and carefully cultivated, with the same talents and knowledge, they would probably have been many times more useful and respectable.

It is a great mistake to suppose, as seems commonly done, that a man cannot be entitled to the reputation of a scholar, without having conversed with the Greek and Roman authors. For almost any useful purpose, we are as little in need of them now, as they were of us in their time. If all the useful knowledge they possessed, has been transferred to our *own* language, I cannot conceive why we should think it necessary to be at the trouble of learning *their's*, merely to know how they wrote and spoke.

But, there are some who prefer any thing that bears the stamp of antiquity, to the most useful modern improvements; just as a brain-sick antiquarian would rather handle a supposed Roman medal, than the most valuable piece of current money, however necessary to his pocket; or traverse the ruins of an old tower or castle, rather

than see the most elegant and convenient structure of modern architecture. But this is an argument of a diseased, rather than a sound state of mind. However, that I may not be thought to violate that old frivolous adage, *De mortuis nil nisi bonum*,* let them have their place; where we cannot do without them, or will receive benefit equivalent to the time spent in learning them, let them be learned. It is wise to derive all the advantage we can from the labors of those who have gone before us: but while they are deemed of consequence enough to merit a place in a course of education, let it be such as will not interfere with the precedence to which our own language is, in all respects, entitled.

It would therefore appear to be a regulation of utility, that every boy who is learning the Latin and Greek, should be obliged, at least once every day, to perform an exercise in English, in some approved author, from whom he might learn both language and sentiment. Of such there is a great variety, and more easily to be found than in the dead languages. They should be in biography, in history, civil, or natural, moral, sentimental, fabulous or real, in poetry or prose; and, after the time proper for a critical acquaintance with grammar, every exercise of reading should be followed by one illustrating the construction of the language.

* We must say nothing to the disadvantage of the dead.

In a course of this kind, continued for a sufficient time, the learner might be made acquainted with the best writers, suited to his years and prospects. This would early give him an habit of speaking and writing his own language with propriety and ease; and furnish him with useful knowledge, easily acquired, because conveyed in the language most natural to him.

That the English can supply as good a set of classics, as those languages which have so long maintained the preference in our schools, cannot be doubted, by any one who thinks our own as fully adequate to our necessities, as the Greek and Roman were to the people who spoke them; and that the genius of modern times is not inferior to that of the ancient. If Paradise Lost were used instead of the Iliad, or Eneid; or, Pope's translation of the one, or, Dryden's of the other, for the original; or, Milton's Lycidas, Comus, l'Allegro, or Il Penseroso, for the odes of Horace; or, the Essay on Criticism for the Art of Poetry; where, I ask, would be the detriment to the learner? Or, would not Dyer, Gray, West, Cowper, and many others that might be named, be superior in all respects, for the use of those who had a taste for poetry? I am certain that not one of the classic poets is so well entitled to a reading, as those elegant and moral moderns.

In every other species of writing, it would be easy to point out a number of moderns, in our own language, equal, nay preferable, as to our use, to any thing of the same kind, among either the Greek or Roman writers.

Next to the English, it appears to me that the French, on every account, deserves the preference. Our connection with them, at present, and the probability that it will be more intimate; the number of people who speak it now among us; the commerce we carry on with them; the excellency of their writings, and the similarity of the principles of government to our's; render the knowledge of their language more important to us, than that of any other nation, ancient or modern. Whether, therefore, we learn the dead languages, or not, that will justly merit the second place, in all our schools. And, as there are, in every populous town, on the continent, persons capable of teaching it's true pronunciation, it may very soon be learned, by any one of a tolerable genius.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. X.

Having hinted, in a preceding number, my intention to give a few specimens of the manner of explaining the ancient mythology, I shall employ this for the purpose.

As far as history throws any light on this subject, the Egyptians seem the best entitled to the honor of being its inventors, or at least of laying the foundation on which the whole fabric has been erected. With them, indeed, it was a very different thing from what we find in the Greek and Roman authors, or any of the ancient nations who adopted it from them. It happened in this case, as it has frequently in others, that a thing rational and important, in its first institution, by the misapprehensions of succeeding times, has been perverted to purposes entirely different from its original intention. The principles of the ancient mythology appear to have originated partly from a sense of religion, and partly from the wants of society.

The Egyptians, as probably all other nations, had retained from tradition some knowledge of a supreme power and providence; and being destitute of any current writing, they made use of certain rude sculptures, or paintings, to express their ideas on these subjects, and others which con-

cerned the common good. As the symbol of the supreme being, or that influence which actuates the universe, and provides for the wants of mankind, they painted the eye, a sceptre, a charioteer, a circle, or a figure representing the sun. This last, it is probable, they considered either as really the principle of universal life and motion, or as the most proper representative of it. But, however this might be, it makes a principal figure in their hieroglyphics.

The following explanation is on the principles of the elegant and philosophical *Le Pluche*, who has given a more satisfactory account of this subject, than any other writer.

The Lower Egypt was subject to an annual inundation of the Nile, which, while it became the means of their subsistence, obliged them to retreat for three months to the higher grounds, and there wait for the return of the water to its channel. The rising of the Dog-star was the signal of the approaching inundation, and warned them to prepare for their flight.

With the symbol which represented this important event, they connected others expressive of the winds which blew at the rise or falling of the water, the source from whence it proceeded, or the inconveniencies and advantages that attended it. At length they invented characters for all the seasons of the year, and the works proper for

them respectively; which diversified according to their particular intentions, furnished a sort of regular history of the year.

The whole of these public signs were reduced to three names, each of which comprehended a particular set of characters; they were Osiris, Isis and Horus. The first signified direction, government, dominion; and either intended God, or providence, the influence of the sun, or course of the solar year. *Isis* meant either the prolific power of nature, which produceth all things; or the course of the civil year, that is, the festivals which were instituted either to commemorate particular events, or to celebrate that beneficence which provides for the wants of man. *Horus* signifies work in general, and was diversified into a great variety of figures, pointing out husbandry, or the arts that contributed to the necessities or conveniencies of society, or other particulars of common utility.

These public instructors were well enough understood by the people who first used them; but, being misapprehended by succeeding generations, and people of other countries, they assumed new forms, and were characterized by names which had no longer any important meaning.

Egypt being at that time the granary of the world, was resorted to by people of all the adjacent countries, for the principal necessaries of

life: by which means, their symbolical language was gradually introduced into every country, where their produce was carried.

The Phenicians and Syrians first, the Greeks afterwards, and then the Romans, became their pupils, adopted their figures, without understanding them, and applied what was at first serious and instructive, to mere amusement and pernicious trifling.

In their progress through different nations, *Osiris* became Jupiter, Jehov; Ammon, Neptune, Pluto, Baal, Moloch, Dagon, Achad, or Hadad, Adonis, Atys, &c.

Isis was transformed into Juno, Diana, Minerva, Venus, Ceres, Cybele, Astarte, Ashteroth, Atergatis, and a number of other goddesses and imaginary females. And *Horus* became Apollo, Mars, Bacchus, Dionysus, Menes, Minos, Memnon, and several others.

To which may be added, that the symbol of the Dog-star assumed the names of Thot or Tayaut, Anubis, Mercury, Marcol, Hermes, Camillus, Esculapius, &c. All these, in process of time, attained the honor of being thought real personages, who had done important services to mankind; were given a place in history, and revered as beneficent divinities, the governors of the world. How far they deserved the rank assigned to them, and the honors and devotion paid them, will ap-

pear by a particular explanation of their names, and real characters, as to be hereafter mentioned.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. XI.

As a sample of the manner in which the ancient mythology may be most rationally explained, I have selected the following characters, viz. Mercury, Minerva, the Muses, the Graces, the Parcæ, or Destinies, and Esculapius. And I have made choice of these, as admitting of a more concise explanation, and serving more directly to shew the probability of the principles assumed for explaining the whole system.

Mercury, the *Marcol* of the Phenicians, and *Hermes* of the Greeks, was the son of Jupiter and Maia, according to the mythology, the god of eloquence, the messenger of the gods, &c. He had, indeed so many offices assigned him, both among the mortals and immortals, the dead and the living, that he used to complain that he had no rest, either by day or night, which was not much like a divinity.

But, if we reduce him to his proper character, we shall disburden him of all this care, and leave him nothing more to do, than what might be done by a mere mortal.

Stripped of his adventitious characters, he was only a symbol of the Dog-star, which warned the Egyptians to retreat from the approaching inundation of the Nile. They called him Anubis, Thot, or Hanobroch, the Barker, Monitor, &c. In his hand they placed a caduceus, staff, or wand, the measure of the height of the river, surmounted with wings, as the symbols of the winds, and entwined with a serpent, or serpents, as the emblem of the *subsistence* or *support* of life: and this is always the meaning of that animal, in the Egyptian hieroglyphics. The mistake arose from the ambiguty of the word, which signifies either life, or a *serpent.* His measuring rod being mistaken by the Greeks for a sceptre, or staff of dignity, he was considered as a person of authority and influence, and employed in offices of a public nature. The Greeks, mistaking also his original name, as the Monitor, &c. supposed him to be a great public speaker, and called him *Hermes*; from which it was an easy step to put him at the head of eloquence. Why they made him director of the public roads, merchandize, &c. may be easily accounted for, on the mistake already mentioned.

Minerva, in the mythology, was the goddess of wisdom, the liberal arts, spinning, weaving, &c. and laid mankind under great obligations to her, for her many useful inventions: for which she has been sufficiently honored, by being ranked as a

divinity. But she was, in fact, an Isis, or figure of a woman placed in public, by the side of *Horus*, and holding in her hands a weaver's beam, as the public sign of cloth-making. The Greeks called her afterwards, *Athene*, *linen-work*, her true employment. Mistaking her beam for a spear, or war club, they at length dressed her in a soldier's habit, and made her to preside over military expeditions, or, at least, made her a symbol, or public sign of the time when they were to be undertaken.

We come now to the *Muses*, so celebrated by both ancient and modern poets, as inspring genius, &c. They were supposed to be the daughters of Jupiter and Mnemosyne, and were reckoned nine in number. They were, however, originally, nine Isises, representing the nine months of the year which were *freed from the water*. This is the exact meaning of their common name. Moses was so called, as being *taken from the water*. But the Greek poets, who were extremly fruitful in works of fancy, wholly mistaking their original meaning, gave them names respectively, which had no kind of reference to their true employment.

The *Graces*, who are well known under the names of Aglaia, Thalia, and Euphrosyne, were three idle sisters, who stood with their arms linked together, having no sort of business to attend to. This was a very pleasant subject for the Greeks,

who had no aversion to an easy life. But these symbolical ladies were no other than three Isises, representing the three months of the year when the country lay under water, and the people were obliged to live in a state of *divorcement* from one another, and their works of husbandry. They were called *Cheritoutch*, *separation*. The Greeks softened the word a little, and called them *Charites*. And because these females had nothing to do, they were supposed to be always in a good humor; and their own term signifying good will, gratitude, &c. they placed them at the head of these virtues.

The *Parcæ*, or Destinies, were also three sisters, but in a much more serious character than the former. They were supposed to preside over the life of man. One held a distaff, or spindle; the other drew out the thread of man's destiny; and the other held a pair of scissars, to cut it asunder, when spun to its destined length. This was a very serious employment; but we can assign them one much more innocent. They were merely three *Isises*, the symbols of spinning, as their utensils sufficiently indicate, as well as their name.

We shall close this short account with *Esculapius*, a very famed divinity, the founder and god of physic. His function is, indeed, a very important one, and we ought to give him due honor for his care of the health of mankind. This honor

physicians have long paid him, by placing him at the head of the profession, and ascribing the science of medicine to his great talents and industry, in whatever concerned it. But, in truth, *Esculapius* never studied physic, nor felt a pulse, nor prescribed a dose of medicine, in his life. In his original character, he was simply *Aishcaleph*, the *man-dog*, the symbol of the Dog-star, of so much consequence to the Egyptians His figure was that of a man's body, with the head of a dog, and was the same with *Thot* or *Anubis*, the *Barker*.

In his left hand he sometimes held a pot, indicating the provisions which the people ought to take with them, with a feather stuck in it, to indicate the speed with which they ought to retreat from the approaching inundation, of which he warned them. The serpent that sometimes accompanies him, is a symbol of the plenty occasioned by the overflowing of the Nile; but which the Greeks mistook for the emblem of health, and gave occasion to the medical character assigned him. This account indeed, brings him down from his rank, as a divinity, but, notwithstanding does him strict justice.

On the same principles may be explained the true characters and offices, of the greatest part of the other gods and goddesses, and imaginary personages, that make so great a figure in the ancient

mythology. But this is sufficient for the design of these hints.

Here we may, with great propriety, indulge a serious and instructive reflection. How great are our obligations to revelation for the knowledge it gives us of the true God, the author of all gifts, the disposer of the seasons, and superintendant of the universe! The mistaking of these symbolical figures became the source of idolatry, and the total corruption of true religion, " turning the glory of God into a lie," and unrighteously detaining the most important primitive truths, in the chains of ignorance and superstition, to the extreme depravation of the human mind, and divine worship.

We see, also, the great importance of a current writing, which at once conveys the most valuable knowledge to all capacities, and in a manner liable to no misapprehensions. " The gods of the heathen are idols, vain and impotent, but the Lord made the heavens."

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. XII.*

Leaving the higher parts of the Ancient Mythology, I proceed to mention an inferior order of imaginary beings, entirely the work of the poets, and so necessary to them, that they could hardly exist, in character, without them. I mean particularly the nymphs, which make so conspicuous a figure, both among the ancients and moderns. To these imaginary divinities, the ancients have assigned a certain superintendance over different parts of nature; subjecting to them the special charge of woods, rivers, lakes, fountains; and conferring on them a claim to particular respect from those who enter the provinces over which they respectively presided.

This fiction of the nymphs, exceptionable so far only, as it ascribed to them a degree, though indeed the lowest degree, of divinity, has something in it very agreeable to the imagination; and when employed by a writer of a chastised and correct taste, cannot fail of impressing the mind with innocent, as well as pleasing sensations.

* After a long interruption, I have resumed the hints on education, intending to continue them occasionally, as other engagements will admit of, 'till I shall have completed my original design. And I request it may be all along attended to, that the title of these papers embraces the extent of my plan in the publication.

To a person conversant with these ideas, every grove, rivulet, and fountain, conveys the impression of the presence of some ærial being who presides over that part of nature, and is entitled to be respected as the guardian of the place. Besides this, they are to be considered as oracles, equally qualified to instruct, admonish, and comfort those who are within their territories. The wandering and devious traveller implores the nymph of the wood, when he is lost, to put him in his way; and the pining lover intreats her to ease his anguish, and render her whom he loves propitious to his wishes; and so of the rest.

These ideas do indeed give a certain animation to the different parts of nature; but the moment that reason exercises itself upon them, the impression they have made, together with themselves, vanish into air.

It is not improbable that this peopling of the elements with various orders of inferior divinities, might have taken its rise from an obscure idea of the presence of celestial spirits, and their agency in the world of nature. But, whether this be its origin or not, the impression made on the mind, by the apprehension of the real presence of superior beings constantly attending us, is not only more rational and permanent, but incomparably stronger, and more pleasing. Milton has a fine passage on this subject, in his *Paradise Lost*,

which cannot fail of exciting the most agreeable sensations in a mind capable of relishing the sublime and beautiful.

"Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth,
Unseen, both when we wake and when we sleep.
—How often from the steep
Of echoing hill, or thicket, have we heard
Celestial voices to the midnight air,
Sole, or responsive each to other's note,
Singing their Great Creator! Oft in bands,
While they keep watch, or nightly rounding walk,
With heavenly touch of instrumental sounds,
In full harmonic numbers join'd, their songs
Divide the night, and lift our thoughts to heaven."

These sublime and impressive sentiments are the more agreeable, as they are founded on the Holy Scriptures, which record many examples in which these celestial beings have rendered themselves visible to good men, and performed for them the most benevolent and important services: and perhaps no inconsiderable part of the employment of, at least, some classes of them, may consist in their superintendance of human affairs. If we venture to go one step further, and suppose that individuals among them may have their respective charges; some, of the different districts of nature; others, of the politics of nations; others, of the affairs of the church; others, even of individuals; it not only affords much nobler ideas, but more rational and substantial pleasure, than any thing in the compass of the heathen mytho-

logy; and this may be enjoyed every where, and by persons of all capacities and tastes.

Of the modern poets, Milton has made the most frequent, and I think, generally, the happiest use of the mythology: of which, in his lesser poems, there are many fine examples.

Mr. Addison, in his poem on the picture of George I. by Sir Godfrey Kneller, has, perhaps, the best example to be found, of an application of characters in the Ancient Mythology, to real personages among men.

"Great Pan,* who wont to chase the fair,
And lov'd the spreading oak, was there.
Old Saturn,† too, with upcast eyes,
Beheld his abdicated skies.
And mighty Mars,‡ for war renown'd,
In adamantine armour frown'd.
By him the childless goddess rose,
Minerva,§ studious to compose
Her twisted threads: the web she strung,
And o'er a loom of marble hung.
Thetis,‖ the troubled Ocean's queen,
Match'd with a mortal, next was seen:
Reclining on a funeral urn,
Her short-liv'd, darling son to mourn.
The last was He, ¶ whose thunder slew,
The Titan race, a rebel crew," &c.

They who are acquainted with the real and mythological personages here mentioned, will at

* *Charles II.* † *James II.* ‡ *William III.*
§ *Queen Mary.* ‖ *Queen Anne.* ¶ *George I.*

once see with what singular art, and accuracy, the poet has made the application. But the shortest, and sprightliest example that I recollect, of the use of the lesser heathen divinities, is one of Dean Swift, in a little poem on the cutting down of an old thorn, as it seems, by his instigation:

> "The sylvan powers, with fear perplext,
> In prudence, and compassion, sent,
> (For none could tell whose turn was next)
> Sad omens of the dire event.
> The Magpie, lighting on the stock,
> Stood chatt'ring with incessant din;
> *And with her beak gave many a knock,*
> *To rouse and warn the nymph within.*"

In these fictions, the poets of every age, and of all sizes and descriptions, have dealt largely enough; and the greatest part of them would be much at a loss, if they had not such a resource to supply the want of more important matter: but they only who are accurately acquainted with the Mythology, and are possessed of a just and correct taste, know how to apply it to so much advantage.

As allied to the fiction of Nymphs, it appears pertinent to my purpose to mention the modern one of Sylphs, Gnomes, &c. When this tribe came first into existence, I do not certainly know; but the first mention that I find made of them, is in the beginning of the last century, about the rise of the Rosicrusian society, that admirable piece of ridi-

cule, on the pretensions of false and foolish philosophers.

But, at what time, or from what circumstances soever they arose, the use that has been made of them, by some poets of distinction, seems to entitle them to particular attention. Whether Ariel, and the Fairies of Shakespeare, be of the same kind, I am not certain; but, from the similarity of their employments, I should suppose they are. That ascribed to Ariel in the Tempest is—

——"To tread the ooze
Of the salt deep;
To run upon the sharp wind of the North;
To do business in the veins of the earth,
When it is bak'd with frost;
—To dive into the fire; to ride
On the curl'd clouds."

Among the directions which the Fairy Queen gives for the entertainment of her lover, are the following:—

"The honey bags steal from the humble bees,
And for night tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed, and to arise,
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies,
To fan the moon-beams from his sleeping eyes."

These are exquisite images, and extremely delight a vivid imagination.

Pope, in his Rape of the Lock, has employed the Sylphs and Gnomes to very great advantage;

and the passages where they are introduced, form, perhaps, the prettiest in the poem; though, in describing their different employments, it appears to me, that he has not maintained a strict regard to the qualities and general nature of the agents. While

> "Some in the fields of purest æther play,
> And bask and brighten in the fields of day;
> Some, less refin'd, beneath the moon's pale light,
> Pursue the stars that shoot across the night;
> Or suck the mists in grosser air below;
> Or dip their pinions in the painted bow—

others are employed in the minuter concerns of the fair sex—

> "To save the powder from too rough a gale,
> Nor let th' imprison'd essences exhale;
> To draw fresh colors from the vernal flowers;
> To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in showers,
> A brighter wash," &c.

All which is extremely beautiful, and suits, with great propriety, the general idea of such diminutive beings.

But, when he says—

> "Some guide the course of wand'ring orbs on high,
> Or roll the planets through the boundless sky,"
> "Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
> Or, o'er the glebe distill the kindly rain,"

the powers employed are so vastly disproportioned to the effects they are supposed to produce, that no effort of fancy can reconcile them together.

Mr. Pope must therefore, I suspect, have introduced these lines more for sake of their sound, than the propriety of the ideas expressed by them; which, however, is not the only instance in which that great poet has indulged himself in the same manner. But, granting that, in works of mere fancy, the Sylphs, Gnomes, &c. may be allowed to do any thing that the poet may please to put them to, being entirely his own creatures, I cannot see by what license they can be employed in works professedly serious and philosophical.

By this remark I have particularly in my view Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden; an ingenious, spirited, and entertaining performance; but, in which the author has betrayed a good deal of a weakness too common even among philosophers, that of being fond of new and ingenious hypotheses, without any thing to recommend them but their novelty and ingenuity.*

The Sylphs, in particular, are so often and so gravely addressed, in that work, as presiding over, and managing, the greatest and most tremendous operations of nature, tempests, pestilences, blighting and deadly vapours, and exhalations, &c. that one would be ready to suspect the Dr. was really in earnest, and supposed them to be the only

* Of this, I propose to produce, hereafter, some examples, with remarks, either in the course of these hints, or in a separate paper for the purpose.

agents in producing these phenomena. But if, instead of this diminutive and disproportioned machinery, he had employed, at least, celestial spirits, in those parts of the poem where the subject would properly have admitted of their interference, they would certainly have given it an air of dignity, which it now wants, and have been perfectly reconcilable to the principles, both of philosophy and religion.

I grant that, in other works, as well as in the drama, the rule which Horace has laid down is a very just one:

"*Nec deus intersit, nisi dignus vindice nodus inciderit*,"* &c.

But, I cannot well see how we can treat of the most august phenomena of nature, without some reference, at least, to that power which alone can produce them. Nymphs, Sylphs, Gnomes, and the whole ærial tribe, from Shakespeare's Ariel to Homer's Jupiter, are alike the offspring of poetic fancy; and in the works of fancy only are justly entitled to admittance. But, the One productive Cause of the Universe is the same which presides over, and regulates all the operations of the elements, from the eccentric revolutions of a comet, down to the latent vegetation of a plant.

* A God is not to be introduced, unless the occasion be worthy of his interference.

The particular subjects and remarks of this paper may, probably, be thought of little importance to the general subject I am writing on, and I will not contend that they are of much. They are intended only to point out the necessity of presenting to youth, at that time of education when it is proper to begin to form the taste, such examples, whether of the ancients or the moderns, as may appear best to answer the purpose; that no names, how great soever, are to be proposed as the standards of a good taste, but so far as they are found to follow nature and reason, or maintain a consistency, whether in works of fiction or reality, with the plan and principles of the work they are employed in; and that a well regulated fancy, and a correct taste, in discerning the beauties and improprieties of composition, not only contribute to the rational pleasures and enjoyments of life; but may serve, in some measure, to regulate our manners and aid our virtue.

The operations of the fancy, when properly managed, not only create scenes of pleasure unperceivable by the senses, and unattainable by any exertions of the reasoning faculty; but often form the speediest relief to the mind, when wearied by investigations of science, or other serious engagements; and, possibly, give it a vigor and activity in its general pursuits, not derivable from any other source. At the same time, it requires great

attention and resolution to keep this light and sportive faculty under due restraints; the want of which often becomes the occasion of very serious irregularities, not only in the mind itself, but in society. It is, therefore, an important part in the business of education, early to apply such discipline as will be most likely to prevent an excessive fondness for the works of mere imagination; and it will generally be found much easier to effect this, than to remedy the evil after it has taken place.

ONESIMUS.

P. S. As what I have said of the Botanic Garden is from memory, after rather an hasty reading, if any thing has been mistated, I shall gladly acknowledge the mistake. I wish also to mention, that nothing whatever is insinuated against the orthodoxy of that excellent author.

O.

Hints on Education—No. XIII.

To pursue a little farther the subject which concluded my last, I propose, in this, to offer some plain and practicable expedients for guarding against the evils that are apt to arise from the luxuriance and vivacity of youthful imagination; so, however, as not to prevent the enjoyment of such innocent pleasures as flow from that source.

The first thing proper to be done for this purpose is, to keep out of view, as long as possible, all such writings as have a tendency to fill the mind with such wild and romantic sentiments, as have no foundation in nature and reason; serve to inflame the passions, and seduce the attention from the pursuits of useful knowledge, and the necessary employments of active life. Among these are to be reckoned comedies, novels, histories of lovers, adventurers, and love-songs; all which are every way improper to be presented to the attention, before that time of life, when the mind ought to be supposed capable of forming a just judgement of such works, and of counteracting in some measure the inordinacies of imagination and passion.

Nothing can be more inconsistent with the views of education, than to put, or to allow to fall, into the hands of young persons, books of the description just mentioned. They are generally so extravagant in the plots and conduct, and, what is infinitely more culpable, so loose and seducing in their sentiments, that they are more destructive, in those nations which abound with them, and in none upon earth so much as the English, than wars, earthquakes, or pestilences.

At the same time, there are certain works of fiction, that cannot too early be put into the hands

of youth, after they are capable of understanding them. The following I reckon in that number:—

The Adventures of Telemachus; Robinson Crusoe, the original work and an Improvement or Enlargement of the Story, by a French writer, whose name I do not recollect, but a copy of which I have read, with great pleasure, in Charleston. Don Quixote and Gil Blas may also be added to the former; and, to those of a proper age, the Travels of Cyrus. Full liberty also may be granted to the use of books of travels, in general; and descriptive poetry, such as Thompson's Seasons, and a variety of other authors of a similar cast and tendency. These are so numerous, that where a youth discovers a particular fondness for such writings, there may always be a sufficient number found to fill up every leisure hour from other studies, and prevent any desire of more dangerous amusements.

Another useful expedient is, to keep the mind as much employed, as may be, in the more necessary studies that usually occur in the course of education. And this will be more certainly and easily effected, if the teacher be careful to find out the particular branches to which the learner is most inclined. In these he ought to be indulged to take full scope; or so far, at least, as may be consistent with the general course it may be necessary for him to go through. Attention to this

particular, forms a most important part of the business of an instructor: and the due management of it will save a vast deal of trouble and vexation, both on the one side and the other. Besides, when the mind is allowed to follow its predominant bent and taste, when that is of an innocent and useful kind, it most effectually prevents any vacancy that may require to be supplied by something either useless or pernicious. The studies ought also to be varied as much as may be, that the mind may not be fatigued and disgusted by too long application at once, even to the most necessary and important branches of knowledge.

It will also be very useful to the purpose before us, to permit youth, in a course of education, to employ as much time as consistently may be done in innocent amusements; particularly those which require bodily exercise, which are the most proper and necessary for those who are obliged to spend much time in retirement and inaction. This, besides its conduciveness to health, an article of great moment, to young people especially, serves to keep the temper in a cheerful and pleasant habit, and prevents the necessity of application to such remedies against heaviness and languor, as may prove more dangerous to the mind than the others are disagreeable to the body. Some amusements are indispensably necessary; and in the early part of life, they are every way the most proper and

useful that employ the body in action, while they entertain and enliven the mind.

I mention in the last place, that, as soon as the course of education be completed, whether that be at an earlier or later year of life, it is of great importance to put youth immediately, either to the studies proper to the profession they are destined to pursue, or to some active employment, such as merchandize, or mechanics, or whatever may suit their talents and circumstances.

Besides, the favorable prospects for future life, that an early application to business usually promises, it is attended with the particular advantage of being the best security that can be had from merely physical causes, against dissipation of thought, irregularity of passion, and the necessity of looking out for the entertainments to be found in such loose and dangerous writings as are addressed only, or chiefly to fancy and passion.

Nothing can be more dangerous, especially to those who have contracted some taste for books, than to have much leisure time on their hands, and to be left to fill up that leisure at their own discretion. The result will certainly be, that if they are not attached to some useful study, they will adopt, for their amusement, either light and vicious society, or the reading of such writings as at least require little or no exertion of thought, if

they are not adapted to rouse and inflame the passions.

It is therefore an urgent duty of teachers, parents, and all who have the care of forming the youthful mind, to use every practicable expedient to guard against every thing that tends to induce those habits of idleness and dissipation that afford temptations to dangerous and unlawful entertainments. By this neglect, the most promising geniuses are often perverted, at a very early period, and the foundation laid for an useless, or dishonorable, or pernicions course of life, as well as a forlorn and miserable end

And it is of importance to remark, that, usually, they who are possessed of a lively imagination are proportionably of warm and impressible passions; which, considering the great influence that the former has upon the latter, makes it peculiarly necessary to mark the first indications of such a state of the mind, and endeavor to apply a discipline proper to prevent those irregularities and excesses to which it is most liable.

This being most commonly the constitution of the fair sex, and their first amusements and habits of life peculiarly suited to cherish it, nothing can be more ill-judged and imprudent, than to put into their hands, almost as soon as they are capable of reading, those light and romantic writings which can have no other effect than to promote an

extravagance of sentiment, and sensibility of passion, which require much more to be restrained, than encouraged, and which, after every method of restraint, will, probably, be greater than is consistent with the duties and tranquil enjoyment of that department in life which they are destined to fill.

It has often been observed, that by far the greatest part of female compositions, in our own language, consists of novels, romances, comedies, histories of love-adventures, and light and amorous poetry; occasioned, no doubt, in part, by the kind of reading they were accustomed to, in the earlier parts of life, as well as the particular state of constitution just mentioned. And it is still more remarkable, that some of the most loose and seductive writings in the language, are the works of female pens: so much the more dangerous and seductive, as they are recommended by a vivacity and sensibility scarcely attainable by the other sex.

I will add, that, probably, some of the greatest disorders, and most tragical disasters, that have happened in society, may, in part, at least, be ascribed to a neglect of an early and resolute discipline of the female imagination. But, as I have reserved, for the latter part of these hints, remarks on female education, I omit saying any thing more on it at present.

ONESIMUS.

Hints on Education—No. XIV.

It has generally been the practice, in the course of academical learning, to delay scientific instruction to too late a period; and it seems to have gone upon the supposition that the mind is much slower in attaining the capacity of acquiring the elements of science, than those of language. With regard to some of the sciences, this is undoubtly true: but there are others whose rudiments are as easily acquired as those of language, depending altogether on the same faculty. Among these are geography, chronology, and geometry. As to chronology, all that is necessary for learners, as preparatory to the reading of history, is to commit to memory the more remarkable periods which have been noted by chronologists: a task as easy as the learning of grammar rules. As connecting events with time, it more certainly engages the attention, and will consequently be more readidly acquired, and longer retained, than that which is addressed to the memory alone. For sake of those who may not be furnished with tables adapted to beginners, I have set down the following eras, or periods.

1st. Period. From the creation of the world to the deluge, 1656 years.

2d. From the deluge to the calling of Abraham, 427 years. Year of the world 2083.

3d. From the calling of Abraham to the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, 430. Anno Mundi 2513.

4th. From the departure of the Israelites from Egypt, to the distruction of Troy, 308. A. M. 2821.

5th. From the destruction of Troy to the building of Rome, 430. A. M. 3251.

6th. From the building of Rome to the commencement of the Persian Empire, 218. A. M. 3469.

7th. From the commencement to the destruction of the Persian Empire, 206. A. M. 3675.

8th. From the commencement of the Grecian Monarchy to the birth of Christ, 329. A. M. 4004.

9th. From the Birth of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem, 68. A. M. 4072. Anno Dom. 68.

10th. From the destruction of Jerusalem to the removal of the seat of the Roman Empire to Constantinople, 262. A. M. 4334. A. D. 330.

11th. From Constantine the Great to the Hegira,* 292. A. M. 4626. A. D. 622.

12th. From the Hegira to the investiture of the Pope with the dignity of a temporal prince, 178. A. M. 4804.

This coincides with the year 800, or the 1st year of the English king Egbert. Anno Dom. 800.

* The great Era of the Arabians, bring the time of Mahomet's flight from Mecca to Medina, July 16, 622.

13th. From the 1st year of Egbert to the Norman Conquest, 266. A. M. 5070. A. D. 1066.

14th From the Norman Conquest to the grant of the great charter under king John, 150. A. M. 5220. A. D. 1216.

15th. From the grant of the great charter to the Reformation under Henry 8th. of England, 318. A. M. 5538. A. D. 1534.

16th. From the Reformation to the revolution in England, 150. A. M. 5688. A. D. 1684.

On the vulgar computation the revolution is dated 1688, that is, 4 years later than the true.

17th From the revolution to the accession of the house of Hanover to the throne of Britain, 26. A. M. 5714. A. D. 1710.

18th. From the accession of George 1st, to the American Revolution, 66. A. M. 5780. A. D. 1776.

19th. From the American Revolution to the Era of the French Republic.

From the Creation to the Birth of Christ, is called the Ancient Chronology; from that to the year 800, the Middle; and from that downwards, the Modern.

These Periods may be committed to memory as early as the teacher pleases; and being repeated from time to time, will be very easily retained for application in reading. If a few of the more remarkable events which have happened within them, respectively, were also set down, and com-

mitted to memory, they would both furnish a small epitome of history, and very much facilitate a regular course of reading, when the learner is prepared to enter upon it. For example, in the 1st Period, Adam and Eve were turned out of Eden, to cultivate the earth, as a punishment of their transgression. Cain, for the murder of his brother Abel, was driven from his farther's family, and settled to the east of Eden, where he built the first city. In process of time, the descendants of Seth, mingling with those of Cain, occasioned idolatry, and a general corruption of manners. God having determined to destroy mankind by a general flood, directed Noah to build a vessel, to preserve his own family, and a pair of every kind of living creatures.

2d Period. After the waters were dried up, Noah and his family returned to the land, and settled in the plain of Shinar. Here they set about building a very high tower, that might be seen at a distance, to prevent their dividing, and dispersing into distant parts*: but God, by breaking their common language into several, obliged them to give over their work, and form different settlements and communities.

* The common idea, that their design was to prevent their being destroyed by another deluge, is neither founded on the text, nor at all probable; they could not so soon have forgotten God's promise, and the token of the rainbow.

In this period, the kingdoms of Babylon, Nineveh, and Egypt, were founded, by the posterity of Noah.

In the 3d period, the kingdom of Argos was founded by Inachus. The Egyptians sent colonies into Greece. Twelve cities were founded by Cecrops, in Attica, constituting the kingdom of Athens, &c.

In this manner, by a judicious selection of facts, the natural fondness of the mind for narration may be very easily arrested, and a good foundation laid for any degree of improvement in this branch of knowledge that may afterwards be requisite.

Every family where there are children engaged in this study, ought to be furnished with general tables, for their occasional use; and, if to these were added Dr. Priestley's biographical chart, it would much aid their improvement, and be, at the same time, a genteel piece of furniture for a room.

With the principles of chronology may properly be joined those of geography, as easily acquired, and more entertaining, as well as useful. In learning of this, the memory is assisted by the eye, an advantage not to be had in chronology. It is called, indeed, one of the eyes of history, looking to place, as the other looks to time. Its utility is not confined to men of letters, or those who occasionally read for their entertainment, or instruc-

tion; but extends to all who would wish to know something of the world beyond their own country and residence. Even a common newspaper cannot be read to advamage, nor conversation carried on to any extent, without it. But, it is particularly useful to historians, merchants, and to statesmen of commercial countries. Indeed, there are few branches more liberal, more entertaining, or more useful; and few that render a person more acceptable in well-bred and intelligent company. On the same principle it is that traveles, are so universally agreeable.

It is not, however, to be acquired in a short and hasty reading at school. All that is necessary, or that can be done to advantage there, is to initiate the pupil into the elements of it, and put him into a proper train for advancing in his hours of leisure from other studies in which a teacher may be more immediately necessary. But, to prevent negligence, it would be very useful to examine him frequently; not at stated times, but occasionally; which would stimulate him to be always in readiness to give a good account of his reading.

In learning this science, the following method, it is presumed, will be found as easy and successful as any other—

First, the natural divisions of the earth into land and water; then their sub-divisions, as the first

into hills, mountains, &c. the latter into seas, rivers, oceans; and then the continents, and their political divisions, into kingdoms, republics, &c. Then their capital cities, principal towns, rivers, &c. Then, their natural curiosities, as grottoes, caves, &c. Then their persons, habits, customs, manners, &c. Then, their divisions into provinces, with their principal towns, &c. Then their religions, laws and government, trade and commerce, revenues, forces, &c. which are to be the finishing parts of the study.

In teaching these it will be useful to instruct the learner in the method of finding the situation of places from his own residence, which will much rouse the attention, and is a very easy matter on the map. As to the lines and problems of the artificial globe, they are properly referred to astronomy, where we shall introduce them

One general remark it is thought proper to make here, on a presumption that it is of real importance to society, and that is, that the laws and government, and other political subjects which occur in learning this science, may very well be omitted by young ladies. Their particular province in society by no means requiring a knowledge of these matters, and their native dignity and importance rather lessened than increased by them, they ought to be omitted, at any rate, till maturity of judgment and experience shall qualify them to ap-

ply such knowledge to augment their respectability and usefulness. This, however, can very seldom be the case.

I have only to mention, in this place, that they who are learning the dead languages, ought to begin this study as soon as they enter upon the classics; say, Eutropius, Nepos, &c. and ought to be provided with a good set of maps for the purpose; the best that I have seen are Moll's Geographia Antiqua. Holmes, of Holt, in Norfolk, in England, has published a good work of the like nature.

ONESIMUS.

[The Editor, with regret, finds that the author has left these *Hints on Eduction* unfinished.]

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF THE PEOPLE.

NUMBER I.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

"Of all the controversies of the pen, next those of religion, those "of government are the most honorable and the most useful; "the true end of each, though in a different way, being, that the "will of God may be done on Earth, as it is done in Heaven. "Of all controversies of government, those in vindication of "popular governments, are the most noble, as being that con- "stitution alone, from whence all we have that is good, is des- "cended to us; and which if it had not existed, mankind had, "at this day, been but a herd of beasts"—HARRINGTON.

"The assertors of liberty want no other patron than God "himself."—SYDNEY.

AFTER the fair experiment which has been made of the wisdom, integrity and patriotism of the present administration, one might justly be astonished that there should be a single man in the union capable of finding fault; but the scandalous and outrageous clamour which was raised against Mr. Jefferson previous to his election, from the plough, the counter, the bar, the bench and even from prostituted pulpits, prepared us to expect that no measures he might afterwards adopt, how

favorable soever to the common prosperity, would escape the censure of a certain class of men. Events have fully justified our apprehensions. A broken and desperate party, whose ambition and avarice, raised to the highest pitch by the profusion and profligateness of the last administration, have been disappointed by the integrity and economy of the present, continue an hopeless opposition, merely to gratify their own spleen and resentment; for, no other cause can be assigned for their conduct—most unreasonable conduct.

Destitute themselves of liberal and patriotic principles, they are tortured with vexation to see those principles rapidly gaining the approbation of the nation, and defeating every effort to overthrow our republican constitution, and degrade the nation under a royal aristocratic despotism.

Two circumstances are clearly the main grounds of all the affliction which the leaders of this faction* endure, and all the opposition they make to Mr. Jefferson's administration, its growing popularity, which proportionably reflects dishonor on the preceding; and the tendency of the present order of things to promote the comfort and prosperity of the people at large, and to raise them to that consequence in society to which, as citizens, they are most justly entitled.

* The Federalists are now really a faction, and nothing more.

It has ever been the cruel and abominable policy of government, except in the republics which have existed, to break down the spirit of the people, by keeping them through perpetual exactions, as poor and wretched as possible, that their rulers might manage every thing their own way, and multiply to the utmost, the means of pampering their pride and luxury, and all the worst passions of the human heart. Accordingly, while kings, princes, nobles and the leading officers of government have rioted in sensuality to satiety or disgust, the body of the people have been naked, famished, and almost houseless; not only denied the consolation of pity, but vexed with the scorns of unfeeling insolence.

The history of all ages bears testimony to the truth of this assertion. The humane and feeling who participate in the sufferings of their fellow creatures, in reviewing the history of the world, find perpetual and direful recitals of misery, inflicted by the oppressive and tyrannical governments which have usurped, from the great body of men, those rights which they ought to have possessed by the just and equal constitution of nature.*

* The abominable doctrine of Judge Chase, that all men are not equal by nature, is not only contrary to the first principle of our Constitution, but to the sentiments of the best civilians and soundest philosophers, from Aristotle down to the present day. There is no doubt with me, that Judge Chase has never troubled himself with the opinions of great civilians and philosophers.

The same detestable maxims which have ruined the happiness and order of the world, in almost all other nations, have been violently attempted to be brought into credit, and full operation in this.

Under the former wicked and unprincipled administration, the leading federalists, as they have very falsely called themselves, did not hesitate to ridicule *the sovereignty of the people*, and treat them as mere blanks in the nation—Nay, they went so far, as to make them out to be little superior to the beasts of the field, without thought, without any sense of their dignity as men, and as was truly the case then, without spirit to resent the insults which put them without the protection of society. They were in fact, put without that protection, by the memorable and most infamous sedition bill. The proceedings on that detestable act, I hope future historians will, in just resentment to the authors and abettors of an instrument worthy of Lord Chief Justice Jeffrey's, the reproach and scourge of humanity, depict in all its base and terrific lineaments, that posterity may know the depravity to which men in power can proceed, when they think themselves safe from responsibility. I never can reflect on that business without the highest indignation, but with regret that every man who was concerned in it, has escaped the punishment due to criminality, as great as within

the power of man, except against the authority of heaven. The people indeed, to one's utter astonishment, not only bore with patience all the insults that were offered them, by men who estimated them no higher than mere animals; but even supported and caressed them. This, I must confess, might almost tempt one to think, that they deserved all the contempt which the insolent rulers of that day cast upon them. But they were deceived by as base intrigues as ever were practised on unsuspecting minds, and were very near losing their liberty, forever. We must pardon them for their credulity, and give them a serious warning against falling into the like mistake hereafter. If they once give up the sole management of their political interests, to those who choose to take upon themselves the business of government, they will merit all the indignities, deprivations and miseries, which such stupidity will infallibly produce. But, I entertain the animating persuasion, that heaven will never abandon the people of the American states to such stupendous infatuation.

Let the federalists say what they please against *democracy*, as tumultuous, liable to discord, to change, and unstable in its very foundations—I shall endeavor to maintain the truth of the proposition at the head of this paper; which I hope to make clear to every enlightened and impartial per-

son who will take the trouble to follow me in what I shall offer on the subject.

My design is to give my countrymen a view of the dignity of the constitution under which they live, in comparison of which no other government that I have heard of, will bear to be named—that the adorable king of the universe, by his own example, has ratified their rights, and that if they do not procure them, having the power to do it, they will as much put themselves from under the protection of divine providence, as the Israelites did, when they rejected God, as their special sovereign, and chose in his place sinful and corrupt men, to rule and govern them. I shall first make a few remarks on the origin and power of kings, in the earliest ages that are mentioned by authentic histories—I have obvious reasons for this, though kings are of no estimation with me, and I hope never will be with the people of America. My argument will be *an explanation of the constitution and government appointed by God himself, as for the Israelites*, and on this, though many things in it must be passed over, I rest the truth of my doctrine. "While I have liberty to write, I will write for liberty."

DEMOPHILUS.

November, 1803.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. II.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

The senseless and impious homage which has been paid to kings, by civilized and even christian nations, is an affecting proof of the extreme degradation to which the human mind is capable of being reduced.

That millions of men should be subject to the absolute will of one man or of a thousand, and most probably of the weakest, most corrupt and contemptible of the whole nation they govern, and perhaps, in all these respects, on a level with the lowest of the human race, is an idea which almost makes one ready to renounce any alliance to the species. To surrender liberty, the common supports of life, and every thing that can render life desirable, without a conflict, into the power of others, is an argument *that man has lost the most genuine characteristics of his original dignity, as formed in the image of God.* Yet, an unresisting submission to the will of kings, has been inculcated, even by Christian Divines, as though this royal class of men, generally the greatest disgrace to humanity, and the severest scourges that God has permitted to punish man, for revolting from

his original allegiance, were of divine original, and possessed an hereditary right of jurisdiction over their fellow-creatures, without the least responsibility for their conduct.

This very doctrine of the divine right of kings, we know, was considered, not much more than a century ago, as sacred and obligatory on christians, as the most essential article of the christian faith—and the man who had the courage and honesty to deny it, would have been considered as an heathen man and a publican, if he was not adjudged to the honor of laying down his life in refutation of nonsense and impiety. The translators of the present English Bible, though *learned, pious and very estimable men*, were led through the force of prejudice and mistake of certain passages in the New Testament; to adopt the *jus divinum* of kings, the common doctrine of the British nation, in the most corrupt periods of its government, and to press upon the people as slavish doctrines as the worst emperors of Rome could have wished to be received among their subjects, when Nero, and the other dæmons who were the faithful imitators of his detestable crimes, were in power. Their dedication to king James is not exceeded in servility, and a base prostitution of attributes proper to God alone, by any homage ever paid to man, except saying—"thou art a God"—they say, "to the *most high and mighty*" Prince James, and "*most*

dread sovereign." When I read this language, and a thousand other similar examples of that time, and of times long since, I know not whether I feel most indignation or shame, that the Christian ministry should ever have condescended to adulation so unworthy of men; and of which there can be mentioned no stronger example, even in savage life. I shall have more than one occasion to remark the influence that this prejudice of these *great and good men* has had, in translating passages of the *sacred text*, to a sense extremely remote from the original.

That the doctrine of the divine right and origin of kings has no foundation either in reason, or the early practice of mankind, can be maintained by proofs of the most satisfactory kind. It is impossible for a rational man to believe that God ever established it as a law of perpetual obligation, that men should be bound to acknowledge the authority of any man who might be called a king; however senseless, debauched and destitute of every qualification for the purpose. Such men he has permitted to rule—but he never gave them any credentials of his commission. He permits Satan, "the prince of the power of the air," to oppose his authority, by enticing mankind to sin against him—but he never authorised his wickedness. That kings, and all other civil rulers were originally elected by the free suffrages of the people,

there can be no doubt. In support of this, I shall adduce an example or two, not thinking this part of my subject of importance enough to go into any minuteness of discussion. The first example of any thing like the kingly power, is that of *Nimrod*, who rose to power and reputation 150 years after the flood.

This Nimrod has, indeed, been considered as a violent usurper of power, and a cruel and wicked tyrant over the people of his time. But, the sacred history gives no such idea of him. Indeed, in point of reason, such usurpation would have been impossible in itself, whatever taste he might have had to be a tyrant and oppressor. The fact, I believe, with regard to him, to have been simply this—he had acquired much reputation among the people, for his courage and expertness in destroying the wild beasts which infested the country; and this induced them to choose him as a leader in their various enterprizes, whether of making settlements or conducting war, and perhaps, of deciding controversies, most probably by appellate jurisdiction. These two last offices were the particular objects which the people had in view, in electing kings, in the ages I am speaking of, and in those of a much later date. There was then no other power annexed to the kingly office, and the term itself, in its first usage, implied

nothing more than *leader* or *director*, taken from the employment of a shepherd.

After mentioning that the beginning of Nimrod's kingdom was "Babel, and Ezech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar," our translation adds, "*out of that land went forth Ashur, and built Ninevah*," &c. But, I prefer the reading of those critics who take Ashur in the objective case, as the name of the country afterwards called Assyria. The reading then, will be, "*And he*, (Nimrod) *went out into Assyria*," &c. Finding the plain of Shinar too contracted for the number of the people, he led a colony, and settled it in cities, on the banks of the Tygris. As the beginning of his kingdom or government was Babel, &c. it implies, clearly, that he afterwards extended it. However, independent of the grammatical construction of the passage, I cannot think that so careful, and indeed, accurate an historian as Moses, would, in reciting the genealogy of Ham, so abruptly introduce the second son of Shem, who is not mentioned till the eleventh verse afterwards. In all this there appears nothing at all to favor the idea of Nimrod's having usurped the power he enjoyed. I have no doubt that he was a benefactor of the people, rather than an oppressor; and, limited in the exercise of his power, by rules prescribed by themselves.

I will mention another example, and no more, to show the manner in which kings were introduced, in event, only to be the plagues of society.

Nimrod, I truly believe, was as good in the exercise of his trust, as any one that has succeeded him in the kingly office. After the Medes had rescued themselves from their subjection to the Assyrians, they fell into great disorder, as ever happens after great revolutions. In this state of affairs, they frequently applied to a private man, of the name of Dejoces, of great reputation for prudence and integrity, to decide their controversies. Finally, in a general assembly of the people, they chose him to be their king. He accepted the trust; and afterwards perverted his power by subtilety and intrigue, into an absolute tyranny, and that hereditary. From this example we may easily see the manner in which hereditary power took its first rise. It was not by the consent of the people, who had the sole right of determining the form of government under which they chose to live; but, through the deception of those whose ambition prompted them to assume the reins of government, by artificial and delusive methods.

I might here rest the substance of my argument; but, the practice of almost every nation of Europe, in different periods, is directly to my purpose if it were needful to produce it. Every one acquainted with history, knows that the people of

Attica, in the time of their kings; the Romans, during the times of their first six kings; the ancient Germans, the Goths, Vandals, Franks, Saxons, Swedes, Poles, Bohemians, Hungarians, chose their kings in assemblies of the people or by their nobles, when such existed. They all acted on the manly sentiments of the Arragonese—"We, who are as good as you, make you our king, provided you maintain our rights and liberties; but, if not, not." This was done at first in the assemblies of the whole citizens; then, in their gimotes, diets, parliaments, cortez, states-general, &c. by their representatives.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. III.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

"MEN," says Aristotle, "ever made kings from first having been benefactors." And Cicero, one of the best and most enlightened of the ancient heathens, remarks—"that *they* ever used to be chosen to govern, of whose justice the people at large had a good opinion."

It was, therefore, long in use for even tyrants to call themselves benefactors. So Christ says to his disciples.—"the kings of the Gentiles exercise

lordship over them; and they that exercise dominion upon them, are called benefactors."

If cruel and sanguinary tyrants, who had no other object in their government than to gratify the meanest and most pernicious passions, may be called benefactors; then, no class of them upon earth better deserve the appellation than those who have been called kings. They have been much better entitled to the execrations, than the gratitude and affection of their subjects; or, as I might more properly call them, their slaves. "The king my master," says a royal ambassador, "has ordered me so and so." And yet this ambassador calls himself a freeman while he acknowledges himself a slave. Julius Cæsar and Alexander might call themselves benefactors; but they were *execrable villains*, and justly merited the fates they suffered.*

When they who are entrusted with the offices of government, violated their trust and acquired despotic power, it was by imposing on the credulity of the people by fair promises and gaining them over to too much confidence by the rentals

* Quintus Curtius, the historian of Alexander, says, he died by poison; and Cæsar was dispatched by twenty three wounds given him by excellent patriots. Cicero, in allusion to the latter puts the question, whether a man who kills a tyrant, that is an intimate, is guilty of a crime? He replies, the Roman people do not think so but consider it as the most illustrious and commendable of all actions."

of their former services. The native good sense of mankind never could think that usurpation was right, and that tyranny was justice. Successful tyrants would say so---" Cæsar," says Cicero, "had always in his mouth, "*sic violandum est jus, gratia regnandi, violandum est*"—" If the rights of men are to be violated, it must be done for the sake of the sovereign authority." " The author of this sentiment." adds Cicero, " deserved death, as excepting that alone which is the most villainous of all actions;" and this opinion is agreeable to the universal sense of mankind, when the genuine light of reason, as to its most important exertions, has not been extinguished, or greatly obscured by luxury and indolence, or the prejudices of superstition, or the habits of subjugation. We may, therefore, consider elective government, so far as sanctioned by the earliest ages, as the institution of God. How or when, the offices of government became hereditary, is a subject in which we are not in the least interested. It is sufficient to our purpose to know, that whatever names the people gave to their rulers, whether of kings, judges, consuls, emperors, &c. they were the creatures of the citizens at large; and the powers entrusted to them, as well as the rules of their office, were determined and settled by the same. We shall now make a few remarks on the powers of kings in the earliest times. We are accustomed,

in speaking of this sort of people, taking our ideas of them from the ages of hereditary succession and arbitary power, to consider them as a privileged order of men, who had a divine right to do what they pleased; to raise up, and pull down, to murder and destroy, at their own option. But men had not such absurd and unreasonable ideas of them, when they first came into use. Their powers were exceedingly limited, their territories or kingdoms very small, and in most of the examples which history presents to us, whether in Asia or Greece, they were no more than *primi inter pares*, the first among their equals. Their dominion, in a thousand instances, was confined to a single city or town, perhaps of no more than a few hundred inhabitants. They were subject to the people at large; and, except in time of war, when they possessed dictatorial power, they had little more to do than to act as judges in controversies, or report to the people, for their consideration; such things as had been deliberated on in a select council appointed by the people.—Without going to any other history, we may see a just and true picture of the state of kings and kingdoms, in the earliest times, in the nations who inhabited the small territory of Canaan, when the Israelites took possession of it by a divine right.

By that history we see that Joshua, as the generalissimo of the Israelities, subdued thirty three

kings, and extirpated the whole of their subjects or citizens. From which circumstance, it is a very probable conclusion, that they were no more, at least the greatest part of them, than *duces imperatores*, or leaders of the people in their military expeditions. Had they been possessed of powers like our modern kings, they would have cut off one another, and the chief victor have remained master of the soil and the people; but, I have no doubt, that in their executive capacity, they had much less power than the president of the United States.

When Samuel, therefore, tells the Israelites, the manner of the king that would govern them, he refers either to the kings of Egypt, or, which is most probable, to the kings of Babylon, Assyria, &c. There is one example strongly to my purpose, which, indeed, took place some considerable time before Moses; but which, I think, may justly be mentioned in the present case.—When the sons of Jacob applied to Hamor, king of Shechem, by a most subtle and criminal artifice, for a free intercourse of marringe between the two people, the king went with his son Shechem to the g tes of the city, where all matters of general importance to the nation were deliberated on, and made the business known to the people, not having any power in himself to determine upon it. I need not mention the case of Abraham, respecting the confederated kings of the East, nor that of Isaac in

the affair of Abimelech; these are well known unto all who read the Scriptures. More directly to may purpose is the affair of the Gibeonites, who were evidently republicans; from which there is ground to believe, that this was the case with many others of the people of that country. Because, republics and despotic kingdoms can hardly maintain good neighborhood for any length of time, unless, as was the case with the people of Gibeon, they are too strong for their neighbors. The deputies from Gibeon, say to Joshua and all the men of Israel, "our elders and all the inhabitants of our country, spake to us, saying," &c. Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, was no more than president of Median—with which office, it was customary at that time, to join the priesthood.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. IV.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

I now proceed to the consideration of the *Israelitish polity*—a system which, whether we consider its divine institution, the humanity and comprehensiveness of its precepts, the perfect equity of its principles, and the provisions it contains to guard against the least encroachment of

tyranny, and serve, as far as possible, the happiness of the people, without respect to birth, wealth, talents, or any other consideration inimical to the liberty and equality which the true ends of the social compact will admit of, is perfectly unequalled and indicative of consummate wisdom, goodness and justice.

A remark or two on the government of this people, during their continuance in Egypt, will be necessary for the clearer understanding of some parts in the constitution they afterwards adopted, and so solemnly ratified.

It seems to have been an early custom, particularly in the family of Abraham, to bestow on the oldest son, the portion of two children, with the privilege or right of chaplaincy in the family; as also, some kind of authority over his brethren during their minority. This authority, by some writers, has been extended even to the power of life and death. But I can find no evidence of this, nor is it in the least probable.

It is clear, however, that the right of primogeniture *was not of divine institution*, nor deemed by those who followed the custom, of invariable obligation. Jacob took it from Reuben,* and bestowed it on Joseph: and of Joseph's two sons. he gave the preference of benediction to Ephraim the

* On account of having violated his father's bed.

younger. Moses and Aaron were of the tribe of Levi: and Moses was preferred in office to Aaron; though the priesthood was afterwards settled in the family of the latter. Saul also was of the tribe of Benjamin, and David the eighth son of an obscure family, in that of Judah.

It is therefore clear, that it was *no rank of nobility;* for it was attended with no jurisdiction over those who were of mature age, nor could demand any respect but that which was voluntary, and is universally paid to age; the attributes of wisdom, prudence and justice, being generally ascribed to it. This gave rise to the *Elders of Israel*, so often mentioned in the history of this people. How long it was, after the death of Joseph, before they became subjected to the tyranny of the Egyptians, we have no account—Previous to that, there is no doubt that they enjoyed an *heautarchy*, or had the liberty of governing themselves. And even after their subjugation, it is most likely that they still, in some manner, enjoyed it; though, undoubtedly, under such restrictions as the kings of Egypt thought proper to make. Most probably, then, the nature of their government was something like this—The oldest in each tribe was called the elder, or head of the tribe; and so it was with the different families belonging to that tribe, the oldest was called the head of the family.

One example of their manner of reckoning by families, will be sufficient. Reuben, for instance, had four sons, Hannoch, Pallu, Hezraro and Carmi, and their respective families were called Hannochites, Palluites, &c. When the first died, the next in seniority succeeded to the name of elder.— Throughout their history, they are called *heads* of the tribes, *princes*,* *heads* of *families*, chiefs, &c.† If they had any authority over the people, it must therefore have been allowed them, merely *through courtesy*, and could extend no farther than to the right of advising; like the old men among our northern Indians.

That they had no set judges in office, will hereafter appear. Probably then, the head of each tribe was referred to, in the higher controversies which concerned a whole tribe; the heads of families, in those which concerned only heads of families; and the elders of all the tribes deliberated on those subjects which interested the whole: and this is all we can say with respect to their government in Egypt. It was then neither an aristocracy nor a kingly government, as to their administration among themselves. It is therefore, most reasonable to conclude, that it was demo-

* Our translation often renders nobles, but the word means only selectos—select men.

† Antecessores.

cratic or popular; that is, such a form as the people at large determined.

When Moses was deputed by God himself, to deliver them a message, announcing to them the divine purpose to deliver them from their bondage to the Egyptians, he was directed to express himself in these terms: "Go, and gather the elders of Israel, and say unto them, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt, and they will believe thee."

Moses, as might justly be expected, the thing being, in itself, utterly improbable, on human principles, expressed much reluctance to undertake the mission and his diffidence, in the success of it. But, God assures him, that he would enable him to work miracles, to convince the people of the divine authenticity of his commission. On his working three miracles, the people believed. Afterwards, however, when they found their burdens increased, they upbraided him and Aaron for the increased hardship of their tasks, without any prospect of their deliverance.

They at last complied, and their elders accompanied Moses and Aaron in their address to Pharaoh, *as their representatives*.—Here, we are led to remark, that though the mission of Moses was to fulfil a promise of God, made to their fathers some hundred years before, yet it was optional with the people whether they would accept of the

promised deliverance, or remain in the country where they were in bondage, but in the enjoyment of the necessaries of life in plenty. This preference of present ease to the hazards of a revolution, uncertain as to its success and utterly desperate, had it not been assured by the divine fidelity, hak kept many a nation in bondage, when the means of deliverance were practicable, with a spirit worthy of an object desirable at any expence. We may further remark, that whatever benefit God offers to mankind, he expects their voluntary concurrence with his proposals; treating them, in all such cases, as endowed with reason and a freedom of acting as their judgment or inclination may determine.

The deliverance was effected, and the people at length in a wilderness, where they were secure from their former masters, but laboring under extreme hardships, which nothing could relieve but the same power which had conducted them so far.

During this time, it appears, they were a *mere multitude*, without any regular organization, civil or military; having, probably, during their time in Egypt, been governed by custom, only, without any written laws; as was the case with many other nations—This circumstance, when their fears of the Egyptians had subsided, and they began to feel the necessity of some regular tribunal to direct their controversies, occasioned Moses

insupportable care and fatigue. Sometime within the second month from *the departure*, Jethro, his father-in-law, paid him a visit; and observing him busied with the people, from morning to evening, he said to him—"What is this thing that thou dost to the people? Why sittest thou thyself alone, and all the people stand by thee, from morning unto even?" "And Moses said to his father-in-law, because the people come to me *to enquire of God.* When they have a matter, they come to me, and I judge between one and another, and do make them know the statutes of God, and his laws." Exod. xviii. Here we may remark, once for all, the true character in which Moses acted, during the whole of his public ministry; he was thereby the mouth piece of the people, to present their enquiries to God; or the mouth of God, to return his responses to the people. He had no authority to make or alter a law, to decide a controversy, or do any thing whatever, of public concern, on his own judgment. It is, therefore, with obvious impropriety, that he is called a *legislator;* unless we use the word in its primitive sense, as *legumlator*, the person in the ancient republics, who carried the laws which had been framed in council, to the people, for their approbation; without which no law could be enacted. We shall soon see Moses acting precisely in this office. After this reply of Moses to his father-in-law, Jethro

told him he was doing very wrong; and that if he would take his advice, and God should approve of it, he would put him in a way easier both for himself and the people. "Provide, *(exhibeto)* out of this people." that is, as *Junius* and *Temellius* supply, and which Moses explains, Deut. 1. *curato eligi*, cause to be chosen, "able men, such as fear God, men of truth, hating covetousness; and let them judge the people at all seasons; every great matter they shall bring to thee, (to consult God upon it) but every small matter they shall judge."* Moses followed his advice, and the people approving of the measure, chose their officers from among themselves, and presented them to Moses, to induct them into office. It is uncertain whether these officers were entirely of a civil nature only, or of civil and military combined. It appears to me, that though their principal office was of a civil nature, they also, at least, occasionally combined with that, a military command, *in the wilderness.*—However, they were dispersed among the different tribes, and their number in each tribe was proportioned to the extent of its population.

* Tacitus says of the ancient Germans—"*De minoribus consultant principes; de majoribus omnes.*" Matters of less importance were decided by their chiefs, the greater by the people at large." *(In Cœtur, Ecclesia,* a general assembly.*)* *De mor. Germ.*

Here we find in the free election of the people, the platform of the Israelitish constitution, and the principles of all just governments—Exclude this principle, and we must pronounce that government arbitrary and despotic.

It has been supposed by good critics, that this institution was the basis of the famous Sanhedrim, which is so often mentioned in the latter times of the Israelites. But I think it entirely improbable, that men appointed to be dispersed as judges among the tribes, should even have acted as a tribunal for the whole nation. There can be no doubt, that these judges were continued, the office of each remaining in his hands during life or good behaviour; but there is strong ground to believe, that the Sanhedrim did not exist before the time of the celebrated *Hasmoneans*--Whenever it did begin to exist, it cannot be doubted that its powers were extended far beyond those on which it was originally founded, if we suppose any thing in the original government of the Israelites to have been, in reality, the foundation of it. When we come to the later times of this people, we shall see more clearly the nature of this Sanhedrim. That the Jethronian prefects, as they have been called, were not such, will hereafter appear.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. V.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

We have just seen that the government of the Israelites commenced with an act of the people, the free election of their first regular judges. And this being the foundation of their constitution, infused the democratic spirit into every form that afterwards subsisted among them.

We may here mention another institution which took place some time afterwards, and is direct to our purpose. On the people's complaining for want of flesh, God, on the expostulation of Moses, in regard to the difficulty and painfulness of his situation, tells him, "gather unto me seventy men of the elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the elders of the people, and officers over them; and bring them to the tabernacle of the congregation, that they may stand there with thee. And I will come down to talk with thee there: and I will take off the spirit which is upon thee, and will put it upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone."--Num. vi. 11. This court, if it was really such, was merely in-

tended as assistant to Moses, and was wholly composed of men who had formerly been elected by the people, and were known to Moses as such. When they had fulfilled their service to him, being appointed for that particular purpose, it is reasonable to believe that they entirely ceased: though some have supposed them also to be the foundation of the Sanhedrim. But, as they are never afterwards mentioned, I have no doubt that their office ceased with the administration of Moses.

We now come to the period, a most solemn and impressive occasion, when their constitution was framed and adopted as their code of laws, to be observed by them through all their generations; and we shall see it to be as formal a compact as ever was made. The contracting parties, indeed, were, in essential respects, extremely unequal, even to infinitude; but, there was so far an equality between them, that each was free to act on the occasion or not. God, though possessed of absolute dominion, would not undertake to govern, as his particular subjects, any but such as voluntarily and of preference, subjected themselves to his particular rule.

By an almost continual display of miracles in their favor from their first mission of Moses to them, the Israelites had been prepared to accept of the offer of God to become their leader and po-

litical head, in a sense essentially different from the principles on which the other nations of the world were governed.* The relation proposed to subsist between them, was that of a careful shepherd to his flock, and a tender father to his children. In both these respects they had often experienced his divine conduct; and there remained nothing to fix the connexion, but a formal engagement, to establish the one party in their duty, and secure from the other, the promised benefits.

When the time arrived—"The Lord called unto Moses, out of the mountain (Sinai) before which the people were encamped," saying, "Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel, ye have seen what I did to the Egyptians, &c. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice, indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be to me a peculiar treasure, above all people, &c. These are the words which thou shalt speak to the children of Israel." This is the proposition on the part of God, with a most important promise annexed, to induce the compliance of the people. "And Moses came, and called for the elders† of the people, and laid before their faces, all the words which the Lord had commanded him; and all the people answered together; all

* They were under his government only as Lord of the universe.

† We must all along consider these elders as the representatives of the whole people,

that the Lord hath spoken we will do. *And Moses returned the words of the people unto he Lord.*" Exod. xix.

After the settlement of this fundamental article of the compact, which implied the assent of the people to the whole system of laws that should afterwards be framed for them; and Moses having recited to them a few of the most important, they repeat their engagement to obedience.—" All the people answered with one voice; *all the words which the Lord hath said we will do.*" So far, I think, we see clearly, *a free popular election*; and the constitution and laws, though framed by God himself, became as truly the government of the people, as though they had been formed by themselves.

On this Moses proceeds to ratify the compact in the most formal and solemn manner, agreeable in substance, to a rite in early use with many nations, *by the attestation of blood.** Directly at the foot of the mount, where the law was given, he erected an altar and twelve pillars. The altar was on the part of God, the pillars on that of Israel as their representatives. Having directed proper offerings and sacrifices* to be made, " he took half of the blood and put it in basons, and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar," *as*

* The apostles Paul says that the beats sacrificed on the occasion, were calves and goats. Heb. ix. 19.

the attestation on the part of God. And he took the book of the covenant and read in the audience of all the people, and Moses took the blood and sprinkled it on the people, that is the twelve pillars, and said, "behold the book of the convenant which the Lord hath made with you, concerning all these words," Ex. xxiv. This latter transaction was *the attestation of the people*, in confirmation of their own part in this compact.

Notwithstanding the assurances we have seen on the part of the people, to adhere to their engagement in this covenant; they all soon vanished in irresolution and defection; for on the continuance of Moses in his intercourse with God in the mount, longer than they expected, they fell into despair of his return. In this state of mind, they applied to Aaron to conduct them back to Egypt, under the standard of a golden calf, *as the symbol of Deity*, which they probably made in imitation of the *Apis* of the Egyptians.

While they were celebrating a festival in honor of this image, Moses returned, and finding them in a state of open revolt from God, he broke the tables of the law, in token of the dissolution of the covenant. But, agreeably to the usual procedure of the divine goodness, God soon forgave them, and wrote the same articles of the law which had been written on the first tables; and renewed his

proposition as at the first. To this the people again consented.

Agreeably to a custom long established among other nations, and which had probably been the case among the Israelites, (making two copies of contracts) Moses deposited the one inside the ark; and laid the other in the side of the same, open for the inspection of the people, or a testimony against them. On every year of release, this law was to be publicly read to men, women, children, servants, and the strangers who were among them; as the rule of duty to the whole.

After this, God directs the people to erect a tabernacle, or tent, which was to serve as the *royal pavilion* among them; from whence all orders were to be given, with respect to their marches, order, war, &c. and might justly be called *the head quarters of the army.* It was in this, that God, who had undertaken to be their guide, resided, by the visible symbol of his presence—and here all their measures were determined on. When instructions were given to Moses, for the erection of this tabernacle, he was particularly directed, to proclaim, that the whole was to be done, by voluntary donation—by those who would give, "with a willing heart." Accordingly, the people contributed so largely, that Moses was under the necessity of telling them to stop; as more

was brought in, than was sufficient for the purpose.*

From this, we deduce by easy consequences, the important doctrine, very contrary indeed to that on which ecclesiastical establishments have always been founded—that the homage which God requires from men, is a voluntary homage. Compulsory contributions, therefore, to the support of divine worship, churches, &c. I must ever think utterly unfounded by divine example; and practised merely as the most potent engines of state policy, on secular and interested motives.

Superstition, the misunderstanding of the Scriptures, party zeal and worldly ambition, have only persecuted christianity by such establishments; and have been the occasion, perhaps as much as any other cause of destroying charity, the most ornamental of the christian virtues; and defeating in a measure, the high purposes of the gospel. May it ever be our wisdom and happiness, to give free scope to religious opinions; from which, however erroneous, no danger can ever arise to those doctrines, which we are assured by eternal verity, can never be overthrown.

DEMOPHILUS.

* I purposely avoid multiplying quotations from the Scriptures, as these facts are known to all who read them with attention.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. VI.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

The next thing I shall notice in this extraordinary polity is *the separation of the tribe, of Levi* to the service of the tabernacle: a department of state immediately under the direction of God himself: and we shall find it to have been a *very popular transaction.*

God, from having spared the first born of the Israelites, on that memorable night when he cut off all those of the Egyptians, claimed all the males of the former as his peculiar property, each of whom was to pay a particular sum as the price of his redemption, or his life was to be forfeited. But having determined to appropriate the whole tribe of Levi exclusively to the use of the tabernacle, he directed Moses to take the number of all their males from a month old and upwards. On enumeration they amounted to twenty-two thousand. He then directed him to take the amount of all the first-born, throughout the tribes: and *their* amount was twenty-two thousand three hundred and seventy-three: Each of those two hundred and seventy-three was to pay, as the price of his redemption, from the obligation of the first-born, *five*

shekels, in value about eleven shillings and ninepence English money.—Numb. viii.

After this, the tribe of *Levi* was to be solemnly consecrated to their office, and *surrendered by the common consent of all the tribes*, to the service of God. "And God said to Moses, take the *Levites* from among the children of Israel and cleanse them. And thou shalt bring the Levites before the tabernacle of the congregation; and thou shalt *gather the whole assembly* of the children of Israel together; and thou shalt bring the *Levites* before the Lord; *and the children of Israel shall put their hands upon the Levites;* and Aaron shall offer the *Levites*, before the Lord, *an offering of the children of Israel*, that they may execute the service of the Lord."—Numb. viii.

It has been doubted what was the meaning of the imposition of the hands of the people on this occasion? Some suppose it *a form of benediction*; but, I rather think it to have been a sign of the *transfer of the tribe* from the people, who could no longer claim their military service. But it is mere conjecture, and I set no other value upon it.

By this transaction we see clearly the important footing on which *the people* stood: and the influential part they acted, in the most interesting transactions of the nation.—This action is the more impressive, as God might have assumed to himself the service of the *Levites*, as a commutation

for the first born, without any interference of the tribes at large. But his condescension on the occasion; was calculated to convey to the *ruling powers* an important lesson on the respect which was *due to the people*, and the sacred reserve they were bound to maintain when the rights of the people were interested. Passing by several transactions in the wilderness which would apply to my purpose, I proceed *to the division of the land of Canaan*, and the other territories which the Israelites were appointed to possess.

While they were encamped on the plains of Moab, Moses died, after having, by God's direction, appointed Joshua to succeed him, to conduct the people into to the promised land. This land, though promised the Israelites, many hundred years before, was to be conquered before it could be enjoyed; and the inhabitants, by God's particular direction, were to be utterly exterminated.

Two tribes and an half, viz, the tribe of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, at their particular request, obtained a settlement on the side of Jordan next to the wilderness, on the condition that they would first pass over Jordan, and assist the other tribes in conquering the country. Joshua then deputed men from each tribe, to go into Canaan, and after taking an accurate survey of the country, to report to him the result of their mission. Josephus says that these men

were accurate geometricians, and surveyed the promised land with great precision. On their report, the land was to be divided among the tribes by lot. The larger tribe was to have the larger quantity, and the lesser tribe the smaller; each according to its population. The whole was to be divided, according to the extent of every tribe and family, without distinction.—There was no provision made for favorites, dependants, sycophants, or any other such vermin, who have ever been among the greatest pests of society; but who in all kingly governments, have ever found their base services amply rewarded at the expence of the labor and sweat of the people. Neither Joshua nor Caleb, though they had served them so long and so faithfully, had any apportionment of territory in the lots. But Caleb obtained an inheritance by a promise from Moses; and Joshua, at his particular request, was allowed the same favor *by the people*, after the division had taken place.

This was a most effectual provision against aristocratic influence. Had any extraordinary portion been alloted to him, in recompence of his services, his descendants would probably have thought themselves entitled to peculiar honors and authority in the state, and made the services of their progenitor a plea for exclusive and hereditary powers. But it appears, that they mixed with the mass of the people, and their names as his suc-

cessors, were never afterwards mentioned. This is an example full of instruction and worthy of the most careful imitation, wherever a people have a just sense of their importance in society, and are resolute to exclude the influence of names from abridging their rights. How much land fell to the portion of an individual, on an average, has been very differently estimated; some have, supposed it not more than four acres: the Jewish writers of the *letters to Voltaire*, estimate twenty acres. But as the whole territory alloted to the Israelites was never taken possession of, and, as we do not know the exact limits of the grant originally made to them, it is mere waste of time and labor to attempt certainty on the subject. However, it was certainly the most perfect *Agrarian* law ever established by any nation. The *Spartans* and *Romans* attempted it, but never could succeed. In the general remarks I propose to make on their system of laws, it will appear, that the most minute attention was paid to the interest of *all the people*, without the least respect to any priviledged body of men. This circumstance forms more than almost any other *the true nature and tendency of this admirable polity, so worthy of God, and so honorable to mankind.* Whatever the portion of land was, which fell to a tribe, to a family, or to an individual, being given by lot, and afterwards secured by the most precise laws, all interest of individuals on ac-

count of family, former services, &c. was completely excluded.

Before we pass to the next period of their history, that of the judges, we cannot avoid noticing a transaction, as beautiful in its kind as any recorded in history; and as strongly expressive of *a genuine democracy*. After the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half tribe of Manasseh, who had obtained their portion of territory on this side Jordan, returned from Canaan, whither they had gone to assist the other tribes in possessing the country, they resolved on erecting an altar, to perpetuate the memory of their connexion with their brethren, on the other side of the river. On the report of this to the other tribes, they entertained a suspicion that the two tribes and an half designed, by this altar, to institute a different worship from that agreed on by the whole. At once they were for proclaiming war against them, and going directly to cut them all off, to avoid a common calamity to the nation. They were, however, dissuaded from this till they should send an embassy, to know the truth of the business. The whole of the tribes, *in a general assembly*, agreed to send Phinehas the son of Eleazar, and with him ten representatives from all the tribes, to enquire into the reason and design of erecting this altar. The deputies made a formal declaration of their business to the suspected tribes; and on receiving a satisfactory an-

swer, they returned the same in so many words, to the nine tribes and an half; who expressed their high satisfaction at finding their suspicions to be groundless; and the affair terminated to the entire satisfaction of both parties, *Jos.* xxii. Nothing could have induced me to relate this transaction in such general terms, but a wish to take up as little room as possible in the Gazette. But, every intelligent reader will easily see that I have faithfully related the affair in substance.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. VII.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

AFTER the death of Joshua, no successor having been appointed to him, the tribes were without any common leader and head, to serve as a common ligament between them, either in peace or war. And it appears to me, that God purposely left them in this situation; that they might use their own liberty in instituting such a form of administration for the nation at large, as they might judge most conducive to the common interest.

There is no doubt, notwithstanding this, that each tribe had a settled and regular government for itself. "Judges and rulers shalt thou constitute for thyself, in all thy gates," was a statute

established by the constitution. These were proportioned to the extent of each city. Of their number different estimates have been made. Josephus, says, there were seven in each. At any rate, whatever their number really was, we must suppose that it was sufficient for the purpose of an equal distribution of justice. When it is, therefore, said, that "AT THAT TIME THERE WAS NO KING IN ISRAEL," it only means that there was no common and stated leader, or tribunal for the discussion of matters relating to all the tribes.

This gave rise to the judges who were raised up and qualified with extraordinary powers, for executing some particular purposes; and when that was effected they returned to private life. But, whatever proofs they might produce of an extraordinary call to act on any emergency, it seems sufficiently clear that they had no authority over the people, but what was voluntarily given them.

The occasions which usually called them into office, were the oppressions which the people suffered from the neighboring nations. When this was the case, either God gave some supernatural sign to a person, to induce him to undertake the business, with an assurance of success; on proof of which, they at once put themselves under his direction—or, without any such sign, they chose one, of whose courage and prudence they enter-

tained a favorable opinion. No one, on any pretence, cold claim an authority to command the people to follow him—They were, therefore, strictly, ELECTED OFFICERS; but when once elected their power was very great, though liable to be revoked whenever the people thought proper. An example or two will be sufficient to place the nature of this office in a satisfactory light.

Gideon, who was the sixth of the judges, was the son of a poor family in the tribe of Manasseh, and THE LEAST, that is, the youngest or poorest in his father's house. However, being assured by an angel, that God would give him a complete victory over the MIDIANITES and AMALEKITES, who had kept the people in servitude for eight years, he undertook the office. "And the spirit of the Lord came upon Gideon," that is, he became animated with extraordinary courage and confidence, "and he blew a trumpet, (the singal of war) and ABIEZER was gathered to him. And he sent messengers though all Manasseh, who also was gathered to him; and he sent messengers to ASHER, and to ZEBULUN, and to NAPHTHALI; and they came up to meet them," to the amount of thirty-two thousand in the whole. However, by God's particular direction, out of this number, three hundred only were selected to go against their enemies; who by a very singular stratagem, put the whole to the rout; and several of the tribes

pursuing them in every direction, gave them a complete overthrow. On this the people were so highly pleased with Gideon, that they invited him to continue in office during life, and offered to settle the same in his family in perpetuity.—"Then the men of Israel said to Gideon, rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son also;—and Gideon said unto them, I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you, the Lord shall rule over you." Judg. viii.

Gideon was not only free from the ambition of authority over the people, but seemed to consider such a power as inconsistent with the supremacy of God over the nation, which the constitution of their government had settled as a fundamental, nay, as the very first article of it. An example of moderation which seldom happens, and which, if the people of Israel had properly considered, would have saved them, in all their succeeding generations, from the heaviest calamites which any nation ever endured.

The case of Jephtha is still more in point than that of Gideon. He was the son of Gilead by an harlot; and his legitimate brethren refusing him an inheritance among them, he removed and settled in a distant part. "And the people and princes said one to another, what man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon?

HE SHALL BE HEAD OVER ALL THE INHABITANTS OF GILEAD"—Judg. x.

"And it came to pass, in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel: and it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, that the Elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephtha out of the land of Tob; and they said to Jephtha, come and be our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon; and Jephtha said to the elders of Gilead, did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? And why are ye now come to me, when ye are in distress?" This was a reply worthy of a man of spirit and honor; but great spirits are capable of higher sentiments, than those of personal resentment. "And the Elders of Gilead said unto Jephtha, therefore we turn unto thee now, that thou mayest go with us and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead; and Jephtha said to the inhabitants of Gilead, if ye send me home again to fight the children of Ammon, and the Lord delivers them before me, shall I be your head? And the Elders of Gilead said to Jephtha, the Lord be a witness between us, if we do not so, according to thy words. Then Jephtha went with the Elders of Gilead, and the people made him head, and captain over them. And Jephtha uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh."—Judg. xi. If any man can find, in

this transaction, any thing like aristocracy, and can make it appear to be such, I shall be less confident in my doctrine. But I may boldly invite any admirer of aristocratic rank and power, to produce any thing in history, more *completely democratic.*

The message of Jephtha to the king of Ammon, previous to his proclamation of war against him, is not exceeded, if equalled, in point of moderation, argument and spirit, by any thing to be found in antiquity. The king was deaf to remonstrance; and, as usually happens, in cases of confirmed obduracy and self confidence, was entirely overthrown. Jephtha continued in office for six years.

During the continuance of the judges, who were not standing officers, but introduced merely on extraordinary occasions, the constitution knowing nothing of them; there happened an affair, which seems as much as any other transaction, to shew the true character and spirit of the government.

A Levite, who resided as a stranger on the side of Mount Ephraim, had gone to Bethlehem-Judah, to bring his concubine, who had left him, and tarried four months in her father's house. She was prevailed on to return with him; on her way home, she was treated with such contumelious violence, at Gibeah, in the tribe of Benjamin, that she ex-

pired under the insolence. Her husband carried her body home; and cutting it in twelve pieces, sent a piece to each tribe. The affair being quite unexampled in the nation, excited universal horror and indignation; and they said to one another, "there was no such deed done nor seen from the day that the children of Israel came up out of the land of Egypt, unto this day; consider of it, take advice, and speak." There immediately assembled at Mizpeh, which was then the stated place of their national and solemn assemblies, four hundred thousand men, that drew the sword. The Levite, at the request of the people, having given a minute account of the abuse he had suffered, the people came to a solemn determination; "and all the people were as one man, saying, we will not any of us go to his tent, neither will we, any of us, turn into his house: but now this is the thing we will do to Gibeah; we will go up by lot against it, &c."

"So all the men of Israel were gathered against the city, knit together as one man. And the tribes of Israel sent men through all the tribe of Benjamin, saying, what wickedness is this that is done among you? Now, therefore, deliver us the men, the children of Belial, which are in Gibeah, that we may put them to death, and put away evil from Israel." But, the Benjamites refusing to deliver up the perpetrators of the atrocity, the

other tribes immediately went against them. The result was, that the whole tribe of Benjamin was cut off; except six hundred men, who having taken refuge in an inaccessible fastness, obtained peace. The tribes through regret, granted it. When the people, before breaking up their assembly, found that the inhabitants of Jabesh-Gilead, had not come to the camp, they sent twelve thousand men, who destroyed every male, and every woman that had intercourse with man.

The reason of this proceeding, several examples of which nature, are to be found in the Israelitish history, seems to be this—that the connivance of any part of the nation, at a crime publicly known, was a tacit approbation of the same; and an expression of indifference to the calamity which the whole were liable to suffer, on every such occasion. This circumstance of the liability of the whole to punishment, on the criminality of a part of the nation, and even of an individual, was an argument with the whole, to be vigilant over one another, to prevent the commission of offences against the law and constitution.

With regard to Samuel, the last of the judges, it must be observed, that he was raised up, in the character of a prophet; and this character being always supported by miracles, claimed an entire obedience of the people, to the person who so acted.

The character and conduct of Samuel was correspondent to his office. But, having nominated his two sons to be judges in the state; and the people, as might be expected from the character of Samuel, acceding to the nomination, they became established in office. However, their conduct was so very offensive to the nation, that they resolved on changing the government. This was a rash and pernicious resolution; but, such as might have been expected from the occasion. The people were driven to an extremity; and from the long experience of the tribes, they were rendered sensible of the disadvantages under which they labored from having no common head. But, the constitution admitted of no head but God himself; and the application for any other, was an act of high treason; or, at least, a nullification of the constitution.

We might here dismiss the subject; as from this time the original compact was dissolved; and the government ceased to stand on its primitive foundation—the supremacy of God alone, over the nation. But, in proceeding through the Israelitish government, under their kings, an entirely new constitution, we shall find new proofs of the democratic form, and the democratic spirit which influenced them, in every state of their administration.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. VIII.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

The Israelites, as before remarked, being wearied with the government of Samuel's sons, went to him and demanded of him to give them a king. Samuel, it must be observed, had not made this appointment for his sons till he himself had become old, and incapable of sustaining the burden of government. His sons, therefore, were probably to act, in some sort, as his deputies. But he was mistaken, as well as the people, as to their qualifications. It happened in this case as it too commonly does, that the sons, with all the good advice and instructions of their father, were ruled by their own passions, and added a proof, to a thousand others, that whatever other things may be hereditary, virtue is not in the number.

On forming their determination to change the government in the expectation of obtaining a more regular and settled state of things, "all the elders of Israel gathered together, and came to Samuel, to Ramah, and said to him, behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make a king, to judge us, like all the nations." The proposal was displeasing to Samuel, who carried the matter to

God for his instruction on the occasion. God, in reply, told him to comply with the request of the people; for, said he, "they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." It is remarkable, that JOSEPHUS uses a word here which imports that THE PEOPLE VOTED GOD FROM BEING THEIR KING. "SPUERUNT ME," is the translation of JUNIUS and TREMELIUS; they have, by contempt, set me aside from being king—and both the *Hebrew* and *Septuagint* agree in this sense. It was indeed, a very high and treasonable contumely. But, as they had *freely elected* him to be their king, so, he permitted *them, on their own choice*, to set him aside, and choose another in his room. The liberty turned out to their destruction.

Samuel was then directed to give them a solemn admonition on the subject, and to inform them of the manner in which they might expect their kings would exercise their authority over them; agreeably to the customs of those of other nations. But the people, determined on having their wish, said to *Samuel*—"Nay, but we will have a king over us that we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles." 1 Sam. viii. Moses, while in the wilderness, foreseeing that the people would, at some future day, change their government, had given particular instructions on the subject, and

prescribed the rules by which they should be governed in the choise of their king; and by which *he* was to be governed in his administration. "When thou art come into the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and dwell therein, and shalt say—"I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me."

Rules about their kings.

1. Thou shalt, in any wise, set him king over thee, whom the Lord thy God shall chose. 2 From among thy brethren shalt thou set a king over thee; thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, who is not thy brother. 3. But, he shall not multiply horses to himself, nor cause the people to return to Egypt, to the end that he should multiply horses; neither shall he multiply wives to himself. 5. Neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver or gold, 6. And it shall be, when he sitteth on the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book, out of that which is before, (in the custody of) the priests and Levites. And it shall be with him, that he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the works of *this law* and *these statutes*, to do them *that his heart be not lifted up above his brethren.*" &c. Dent. xvii.

Here we clearly perceive what sort of kings the Israelits were to have. They were limited so strictly in the exercise of their office, their duties

were so exactly prescribed, their ambition so retained and the whole of their powers so refined agreeably to the constitution, that no room whatever was left for the exercise of their own will; whatever bias it might have on the side of arbitrary power. Exactly defined as the laws were on this subject, their kings acted as the lowest of mankind commonly do; just as their ambition, sensuality or avarice pointed out the way. It is, however, sufficient to my purpose to know what the law was; how far their kings observed it, is a consideration with which I have no concern in this discussion. *Samuel* was directed as the series of the history points out to anoint Saul, the son of Kis, of the tribe of Benjumin, to be the first king of the Israelites. This unction, or pouring of oil upon a person, was merely *a designation to office;* but *it did not invest the person anointed with the office* whatever it was. The power of doing this lay entirely with the people.

So, the lots were afterwards taken with respect to Saul, and the people inducted him into office. This inauguration seems to have been but partial, as to the concurrence of the people. There were some who disapproved of it, and therefore, brought the king no presents * However, Saul thought it prudent to take no notice of it. After a defeat

* These presents, in some places, in the early ages, formed a principal part of the royal revenues.

of the Ammorites, who had besieged Jabesh-Gilead, the people became united—Then said Samuel to the people, come, let us go to Gilgal, and renew the kingdom there. And all the people went to Gilgal, and they made Saul king before the Lord in Gilgal."—1 Sam. xi.

It ought to have been remarked, that after Samuel had declared the appointment of Saul to the kingdom, and said to the people, "do ye see him whom the Lord hath chosen." It is added—"then Samuel told the people the manner of the kingdom, and wrote it in a book, and laid it up before the Lord."—1 Sam. x. This manner of the kingdom, I suppose to be the *jus regni*, or the laws which regulated the royal prerogative; or it might be only a repetition of the rules prescribed by Moses, in the wilderness, already recited. We shall find hereafter, that the king enters on his office, with a solemn promise to adhere to his duties, as prescribed by the law.

Saul, by his misconduct, being at length rejected, as unworthy any longer, to sway the sceptre, David, while a very young man, was, by divine appointment, designated by unction to take Saul's place. After passing through a series of difficulties, he was at length, on the death of Saul, solemnly inaugurated into office, by the tribes of Judah and Benjamin." The place appointed for the purpose, was Hebron. And the men of Judah

came, and then they anointed David king over the house of Judah. A strong party however, even ten of the tribes, through the influence of Abner, who had been general of the army under Saul, set up Ishbosheth, the son of Saul, in opposition to David. And the time in which his kingdom was confined to a single tribe, and part of those of Benjamin, was seven years and six months—2 Sam. ii. At length, however, on occasion of an affront given by Ishbosheth to Abner, the latter went to David and compacted with him, to bring the other tribes to unite with Judah under him. "Then came all the tribes of Israel to David in Hebron, saying, &c. So all the Elders came to the king to Hebron; and king David made a league with them in Hebron, before the Lord, and they anointed David king over Israel," 2 Sam. v. Though David had been designated by God himself to the kingdom, yet, we see that the people did not consider themselves as bound by this designation, to receive him. Afterwards, he was obliged previously to his entering into office, to bind himself by a solemn compact, to fulfil the duties of his office according to the law. This was the league on his part; on theirs, the engagement to obedience, so far as he acted conformably to that law.

David therefore was made king, by a free popular election; and this being the highest act of

sovereignty in a nation, there seems so far, a clear proof, that this government though a kingdom, was also a democracy. For sake of brevity, I have passed over the affair of Absalom, in drawing, through address, a large body of the people over to himself. Though an act of unnatural and most blameable ambition, it is still a proof of the liberty which the people thought themselves entitled to use, with respect to their government. It sprang from the constitution itself; and we find no blame charged to their account for the proceeding.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. IX.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

FROM the time that David left the peaceful employment of a shepherd, to attend at the court of Saul, his life, for the greatest part of it, was a web of embarrassment and disaster.

Saul had persecuted him with unrelenting malice, and without a cause. Absalom, his darling son, had attempted to draw off the people from him—For seven years ten of the tribes refused to join themselves to his kingdom; and to crown all, when he was helpless and decrepid through age, and lay under the pressure of the last infirmities

of life, his son Adonijah, put in his pretensions to the kingdom, against the appointment of Solomon, who had been designated to the same by God himself, and authorised to possess it by the subsequent nomination of his father. In this business were concerned some of the principal men of the kingdom, Joab the general of the army, and Abiathar the priest. Though the affair was managed without any knowledge of David, it appears to have been done of a sudden, and there was not time sufficient to bring it to maturity, before it was discovered, and entirely defeated.

Though Adonijah's project was baffled by the remaining authority of his father, it is easy to discern the opinion which the people entertained of their own rights; and probably nothing but the high estimation in which David was held, would have rendered his nomination of Solomon strong enough to carry it into effect.

It was, however, carried into effect, and Solomon established on the throne, so far as his father's nomination could go; but, this was not sufficient to put him in peaceable possession of the supreme authority—The assent of the people was wanting: and this made it necessary to have another inauguration, in which there should be a more explicit and public agreement of the people to his coronation.

David having assembled "all the princes, (præfectos) of Israel, the princes of the tribes, and the captains of the companies that ministered to the king by course, and the captains over the thousands, and the captains over the hundreds, and the stewards over all the possessions of the king, and of his sons, with the officers, with the mighty men, and with all the valiant men, unto Jerusalem." These men acted as the representatives of the whole people, the greatest part of them belonging to the monthly courses; who not only acted as a militia, but were always present in the most important transactions of the nation, in their turns. Each course or change consisted of twenty-four thousand. David began his address to them in these terms:—"Hear me, my brethren and my people," &c. This is very extraordinary language for a king. If the king of Great Britain were to address his parliament in this manner, I suppose they would consider him as in a state of mental derangement. But David knew his duty, and that the succession of Solomon to the throne, depended on the will of the people. This, therefore, he first attempts to conciliate.

After this, very solemn sacrifices were offered, and great festivity prevailed on the occasion;—"and they eat and drank, on that day, before the Lord, (that is in a solemn rite) with great gladness. And they made Solomon, the son of David,

king the second time. And all the princes, and the mighty men (military officers) and all the sons of king David, (says our translation) submitted themselves unto Solomon the king." But the true translation is, *dederunt manum,** *(se fore) subditos regi scholomoni*, they pledged themselves to submit to him."—1 Chron. xxix.

From this time Solomon was peaceably settled on the throne, and enjoyed a reign of great glory and prosperity for forty years. He had, indeed, greatly deviated from his duty, as fixed by the laws of his kingdom. His idolatry through the influence of his heathenish wives; his splendor of living, oppressive to the people, in guards, horses, horsemen and chariots, rendered him so culpable, that he fell under the divine displeasure, and was twice informed, by God, that the kingly power should cease from his family—"Wherefore, the Lord said unto Solomon, because this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant, &c. I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servants, &c.—1 Kings, xi.

God, however, assures him that he would not fulfil his threat in his days, and that he would not entirely rend the kingdom from the family of Da-

* The giving of the right hand was, among many nations, the pledge of friendship and alliance. "Though hand is in hand, (says Solomon) the wicked shall not prosper." Though pledged to one another, they shall not be able to execute their projects.

vid, to whom he had made express promises that some degree of rule in his tribe, should continue until the termination of the Jewish polity. And the promise, being of divine verity, was literally accomplished—Gen. xlix, 10. Accordingly, Rehoboam succeeded Solomon, probably, on the recommendation of the latter.

This would, no doubt, have considerable effect, in securing the attachment of the people. The peace, the extraordinary prosperity of the nation during his reign; and above all, the glory of the temple, so highly honorable to it; all contributed to render the accession of Rehoboam to the kingdom, certain and easy.

"And Rehoboam went to Shechem; for all Israel were come to Shechem, to make him king." 1 Kings, xii.

As the kings of Israel, previous to their inauguration into office, were obliged to enter into a solemn compact with the people, to act in their office according to law; the deputies of the Israelites waited on Rehoboam, with a request that he would relieve them from some of the burdens which they had borne during the reign of his father. The request was perfectly just, as Solomon had certainly far exceeded his powers, in the impositions he had laid upon them. Rehoboam put them off for the present, desiring them to come on the third day after.

In the mean time, he called the old men who had been counsellors to his father, to give their advice on the subject. They replied to him, as men of experience and sound discretion—"If thou wilt be a servant to this people, this day, and will serve them, and answer them, and speak good words unto them, then they will be thy servants forever."

The advice was reasonable and conformable to the rights of the people: and had it been followed, might have secured Rehoboam in possession of the whole kingdom, and prevented a rent which never could be repaired.

The vain, and foolishly elated spirit of Rehoboam spurned at the advice of the old men; and he preferred that of the raw and inexperienced young men, who had been in his father's court, the companions of his youth.

When the deputies of the people returned to receive his answer, he treated them with great insolence; not only refusing to ease their burdens, but threatening to make them much heavier than those they had borne under his father.

This would have been an high provocation to any people, who had not lost all sense of their rights. But to the people of Israel, a very discerning and high-spirited nation, who from the commencement of their government, fully understood their own privileges and authority, it was al-

together insupportable. Ten of the tribes immediately revolted from Rehoboam, and set up Jeroboam, who had been an officer under Solomon, in his stead.

The tribes of Judah and Benjamin,* adhered to Rehoboam—But, they had not influence enough to bring the other ten tribes to unite with them. They were afterwards, in a state of perpetual enmity, under two separate kingdoms.

We cannot, here avoid remarking the folly and absurdity of hereditary succession, as a security against the turbulency of elective governments. Elective governments are, indeed, sometimes attended with great inconveniencies: but, these are transient. The inconveniencies of hereditary succession are permanent and remediable only by violent revolutions. In elective governments there is a prospect of wisdom and justicc, because the people are seldom materially wrong, in either of these particulars, unless they are biassed by undue influence; which seldomer happens under the popular form of government, than either the kingly or aristocratic.

Solomon, probably, wrote his proverbs for the particular instruction of his son Rehoboam—but, how far he profited by the sage lessons of his fa-

* The tribe of Judah, as being the largest, is often mentioned alone, when both are concerned.

ther, we may pretty well judge by his conduct, with respect to the people.

On the advantages of hereditary succession, the excellent *Goguet*, whose learning, candor, and piety, I highly admire and esteem, makes the following remarks: After acknowledging that *crowns were originally elective*, he says, " but this custom could not continue long; mankind must soon discover the advantages of a son's succeeding to his father's kingdom; every thing pleaded in favor of the young prince. The veneration they had entertained for his father, the noble sentiments and wise instructions, it was to be presumed, he had received from him: these, and many other motives, would determine nations in general, to submit to the sons of their deceased monarchs."* This is mere theory: facts cannot be found to support it. The course of history is directly against these sentiments; and nothing, I think, could have biased the mind of this *worthy man*, and profound antiquarian, to express himself in terms so incapable of being supported by facts, but an habit of prejudice in favor of monarchy, contracted from his earliest years.

Is it true, or is it even probable, that monarchs are generally careful to give the heirs apparent to the crown, instructions in their office? And, out of the number who are so instructed, what propor-

* Origin of laws, &c. vol. i.

tion, may we suppose, are the better for them? We can be very positive that such instructions are very uncommon, and that they are seldomer followed than given. Look at the prince of *Wales* the heir apparent to the crown of Great Britian, &c.! Were *the United States* in prospect of having at their head a man so completely dissipated, without improvement, and incapable of it, I would retire from the union, and prefer *the quietude of a Cherokee* to the dishonor of living under a government, in which there would be no security for wisdom, justice, or in fact, any advantage that could recompense the burdens of civilized life, to make it desirable above what is called the Savage. I should not have troubled myself to take notice of men, of whom I entertain the most contemptible opinion, had it not come directly in the way of my argument. Peace to them! I have no concern with them.

After the rupture I have mentioned among the Israelites, the ten tribes formally constituted *Jeroboam* their king. Here our excellent translators, full of the idea of the *divine right of kings*, and kingdoms, say—"So Israel rebelled against the house of David unto this day." This is very erroneous and unjust, implying a stigma on the ten tribes. The meaning is *defecerunt*, they revolted, or rather *fell off from the house of David.* There is not the least blame or dishonor attached to their

conduct; as we are expressly told that "*the thing was of God.*" Rehoboam, had prepared an army of one hundred and eighty thousand men to recover the ten tribes; but, a message from God caused the people to desist from the design.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. X.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

HAVING passed through the reigns of *Saul*, *David*, *Solomon*, and that of *Rehoboam* his son, as far as the division of the tribes into separate governments, and having in my own view, seen the government of the Israelites to be, so far, *a true representative democracy*, I shall here stop in the history of that people. The remaining part of it is not in the least interesting to this discussion; and presenting, until the termination of their polity, nothing but a series of confusion, usurpation, assasination and tyranny, the view of it is neither pleasant nor instructive, more than the histories of other nations which have been abandoned to crimes, and their consequent and necessary punishments. This was the deplorable fate of that people who had once sustained the high and prerogative honor of being the peculiar people of God. But, not discerning their true interests; revolting

from him who had undertaken to preserve them in a state of perpetual prosperity while obedient to his will; and falling, from time to time, into the most impious and irrational idolatry, they were at length subjected to all the calamities which Moses, so long before had predicted would fall upon them on their dereliction of their pledged obedience.

There is no event in history so truly affecting as the destruction of a nation who had once been in a situation more enviable than that of any other upon earth. To this day their descendants feel the effects of the sins of their forefathers, though these are much mitigated by the liberal policy of the American government; and I cannot but think the equal liberty granted to them *the chief glory* of our Constitution. I hope they will improve the the benefit, as I think they will, with honor to themselves and advantage to the nation!

In the course of this discussion, I had intended to take particular notice of the *Sanhedrim*, so celebrated in the Jewish history; but, on more minute investigation of the subject, finding it to be of no consequence to the understanding of the constitution, being a mere usurpation in their times of confusion, I shall pass it by.

I shall only remark in this place, that as far down as the time of Christ and his apostles, the same *democratic spirit* is clearly to be seen. The *Sanhedrim*, though the supreme court of the nation,

and being permitted by the *Romans* to exercise their authority over their own people; so far as not to extend to the power of life and death, yet we find them continually *afraid of the people.* Though they were most bitterly opposed to the doctrines of christianity, and wished to blight it in the very bud, they dared not to execute a single resolution without first engaging the people on their side.

Their influence over their multitude by persuasion, determined *Pilate*, against his own conscience and inclination, to pronounce the sentence of death on *Jesus Christ*, the *head* and *promised deliverer** of that very nation who would be satisfied with nothing but his death. I earnestly wish that the guilt of their forefathers may soon be removed from them, and that every nation in the world may at length treat a people so long persecuted with unrelenting severity, with the same humanity and justice that they have found in America.

If the descendants of Jacob will pardon me the liberty of advising them, in which I have no interest but the desire of their prosperity, and equal happiness with that of the other people of the American States, I would recommend to them to give their children, when circumstances will admit of

* The word, Jesus is only a translation into Greek of the Hebrew word Joshua, or Jehoshuang, which signifies a healer or deliverer.

it, a *liberal education*, that they may be qualified to rise to public offices, equal with others. They have the privilege and if they neglect it the fault will be upon themselves. I shall now return and take a view, though an hasty one, of the character and tendency of the laws given to *Israel*; and I can say, with confidence, that no system of policy ever adopted by the most celebrated law-givers or nations of antiquity, can bear the least comparison with it.

This government has been called, from the *Jewish historian, Josephus, a Theocracy*;* and so it was, in a very appropriate sense. But this is so far from obviating the idea of its being a democracy, that is the principal circumstance which rendered it realy such.

1. The whole system of their laws was perfected at once, so as never to need revision or amendment; which human wisdom could not have done.

2. It was accommodated to the condition of persons of every condition, without the least distinction.

3. It was the most perfect provision that ever was made against the tyranny of one member of the community over another. No room whatever was left for this.

4. From these considerations, it must appear to have been a system calculated for the security of

* The government of God.

life, property, ease, and every benefit implied in the social compact, without respect to poor or rich, free or bond. These propositions will be verified by the following establishments, which no power in the state could abolish or alter, without overturning the whole, and the infringement on the least article *was high treason.*

1. The inheritors of land in the tribes, and of the families and individuals of each tribe, were made inalienable, by the constitution. The portion, whatever it was, remained forever the property of the original owners or their posterity; and and no contract made through necessity, would deprive them of it, only for a limited time. There was a most admirable provision, peculiar to the *Jewish polity*, against the insatiable spirit of avarice; by which an overgrown monied aristocracy, has in a thousand instances, become the most successful engines of oppression. The statute making this provision was clear and positive; and the man who had dared to invalidate it, even with regard to the poorest in the commonwealth, would have forfeited his life, as the penalty of his presumption, "So shall not the inheritence of the children of Israel remove from tribe to tribe; for every one of the children of Israel shall keep himself to the inheritance of the tribe of his fathers." Num. xxxvi. 7, 9.

Out of this principle sprung an institution extremely favorable to humanity, and the permanence of liberty; this was—

2. The year of release, which was every seventh in course—on this year, every creditor that lent to an Hebrew, was bound to release the loan. The poor were to be supplied. "Thou shalt open thine hand wide unto him, and shall surely lend to him for his need." An Hebrew man servant or woman servant, who had served six years, was on that year to be freed. "And when thou sendest him out free, thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy wine press." But if such servant, through attachment to the family, chose to remain in it, his ear was bored to the door post, and he was bound until the Jubilee. But this ceremony was to be performed before the Elders of the place, that there might be no room for fraud—Deut. xv. Ex. xxi.

But, the most important institution in the state, for the preservation of personal independence, was—

3. The year of Jubilee.* This desirable year returned every 50th in course; and, from the universal joy which attended it, was called the acceptable year of the Lord.

* The land in this year, was free to every person. There was no personal property in it.

In this year there was an universal release of pre-occupation. Debts, servants, prisoners, lands which had been purchased, houses in unwalled towns, were all set free, or restored to their original owners.

There was, however, in this case, a very just and reasonable principle established. Every law in favor of the poor, was so constructed, that there should be no infringement on the rights of the richer part of the state. When land was purchased, the price of it was estimated, from the time of the purchase to the Jubilee. If any thing was paid over that time, it was to be restored, on the return of the property to the original owner--Lev. xxvi. 8.

For sake of brevity, I pass by the other peculiarities of this festival. It will be easy for any person who desires to understand it more fully. to look into the institution itself, as just referred to. He will there find, no trace of a privileged aristocracy; nor any separate provision for wealth, birth, or even for kings themselves. Judges, generals, heads of tribes, leaders, kings, or whatever names were given to men of distinction in the state, all of them were boun l by the same law. God, who makes no distinction between men, for the trifling and unimportant differences of their outward circumstances, constituted the system of his laws on principles adapted to the situation of mankind in all conditions, that all might enjoy every

benefit which their situation in society would admit of.

Men of weak and uncultivated minds, incapable of great ideas, are apt to value themselves for considerations, which those of solid merit and just discernment, think unworthy of estimation; as neither conferring real happiness, nor importance on their possessors.* But, God views things in a very different light. His constitution of the Israelitish government, and especially that of the gospel, are decisive proofs of the vanity of all distinctions in human life, that are not founded in virtue and other qualifications, which may render men useful to one another, during their short existence here. Birth, wealth, talents, and cultivation, can be no further really estimable than as they are employed to the common advantage. Applied to the benefit of their possessors only, they are deserving of no estimation, more than bodily strength, a mere animal ability, which an horse or an ox possesses in a much higher degree than man.

Let us now make an observation or two, on the taxes established by the Israelitish constitution, and we shall find them to be such as favored, in the highest degree, the liberty of that people. They were easier, I believe, than those of any other na-

* We might here mention men among ourselves, who are *charmed to extacy*, with *honorable*, *right honorable*, and such childish baubles, *unworthy of men*.

tion in the world; and so far from favoring the avaricious spirit of domination, there was not a single one in the constitution that was not indispensably necessary for the purpose of maintaining it. Nothing was left to the will of their rulers; no stimulus to the views of luxury, or the desire of acquiring opulence by serving the community. Every thing in this, as in all other appointments, was dignified and disinterested.

The only contributions which the people were obliged to make by law, were these;—the sacrifices they were bound to offer to God, as a part of their homage, and an acknowledgment of their sins, which would be forgiven only by an atonement, of which they were only types, prefigurative of the real cause of their forgiveness: but not the cause itself.

A tenth part of the produce of their fields, vineyards, sheep and black cattle, was the property of the Levites, who were both magistrates in civil affairs, and assistants to the priests in the service of the sanctuary. They had no portion allotted to them, among the other tribes: but, in lieu of this, thirty-five cities in the different tribes, on both sides of the river Jordan, were allotted to them, together with the suburbs of those cities, to the extent of two thousand cubits, on every side the produce of these suburbs was their subsistence, while not in actual service. During the time

of their service, they had their support, as before mentioned.

Beside this support of the Levites, which was very light, each man of twenty years of age. paid about a quarter dollar of our money, to the use of the priests and Levites, once in his life.

This ransom-money was an acknowledgment to God, as the preserver of life; and the other prescribed contributions were a civil list tax, for the support of government.

Some other taxes took place in after times; but as these were unconstitutional, we have nothing to do with them. There was another contribution which may here be mentioned; and which I think shows more than any other, the humanity of the Jewish constitution.

It was this—on every third year, each family was obliged to make a feast of charity—to which the fatherless, the widow, the neighboring poor and the Levites, were to be invited. This festival was to be held at the sanctuary, wherever it was, in order to make the stronger impression of the duty on the minds of the people.

It is impossible to conceive of any institution in society, more favorable to the cultivation of benevolence and humanity; and to perpetuate among the Israelites, the remembrance of their being derived from the same stock. The Spartans, who have been supposed to be descendants of Israel,

and whose government had a strong resemblance to the latter, probably instituted their public meals from this example, perhaps also, the feasts of charity* or love, among the primitive christians, may have been derived from the same origin.

At the commencement of the American revolution, the celebrated Dr. Samuel Johnson, of London, was employed by the ministry of that government, to write in its favor. He accordingly, wrote a piece, entitled "*Taxation no tyranny.*" But, it must be known to every man who knows any thing at all of the history of government, that taxation has been the most successful engine ever employed by tyrants, to keep the great mass of mankind in a state of subjugation which precluded all hopes of a just and rational liberty. This infamous intrusion on the rights of men, has produced no other effect than to support in luxury and excess, those who held the reins of government: while the body of the people were in want of the common necessaries of life.

The Israelitish government made no provision for such detestable rapacity. The servants of the community had a decent and competent support, established by law; and while it sufficed them, it was no burden to the people.

DEMOPHILUS.

* The word *charity* in the gospel, signifies strictly, *love*—love to christian brethren particularly.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. XI.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

Illustrations of the spirit and tendency of the Israelitish government.

The tribes which constituted the Jewish nation,* were descendants from one father, and were, therefore, in the constitution of their government, considered as brethren of the same family. It was, therefore, agreeable to a just law of nature, that no one should be considered as having a right to exercise a discretionary power over the rest of the family. The principle, then, on which the constitution seems to have been founded, was this—*that no individual of the nation could with propriety be made a visible head* of the whole. God therefore, by becoming their *real head and director*, freed them from the inconvenience of being subjected to a single man, or any number of men, whose authority might tempt them to the exercise of powers destructive of that fraternity by which the ties of nature had bound them together.

* I use the terms *Israelitish* and *Jewish*, as synonimous; though they were not properly called Jews till after their return from their first captivity.

Another. and a greater object in uniting them in one common and equal government was, to perpetuate, by them, those truths respecting the true God, and *the common saviour*, who had been promised to the world, particularly through the line of that family. For the purpose of maintaining the purity and certainty of the prophecies respecting the *Messiah*,* it was necessary to interest the people at large, in the care of preserving them entire and unadulterated; which could not have been done so certainly, under a government which was not equally favorable to the whole.—Distinction of rank, and exclusive powers in the constitution, would have put it in the power of individuals or privileged parties to interpret the predictions respecting the *Messiah*, in their own way; and their authority would have prevailed, as it ultimately did, when the principles of the constitution had been subverted by the usurpation of the *Sanhedrim*; and oral tradition, by the same usurpation, had taken place of the original law. Had the constitution been adhered to, nothing of this sort could have happened. The nature of the government was calculated to extinguish pride, and attachments founded on the narrow principle of self-love. But no guard was sufficient to effect this purpose. This foolish and unreasonable principle so preva-

* The sent, the Christ, the anointed one.

lent in the human heart, became a principal objection with the haughty and ambitious part of the people, against receiving the Messiah when he came; though his apperance was in every respect conformable to prediction. He was brought up at *Nazareth*, a poor village, and to a proverb, noted for meanness and dishonesty. It was therefore objected against Christ by a very honest man "can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" But his prejudice was soon corrected, and he became a disciple of the *Nazareen*.

This was in the very spirit of the world, which has always been opposite to reason, and the most successful cause in obstructing the happiness of mankind. The Israelitish constitution, by giving no encouragement to such partiality of interest and opinion, laid the best foundation that the state of mankind could admit of, for forming a just estimate of the real interests of human life, and for prosecuting them accordingly. But, with all these advantages, the nation failed of God's peculiar care in placing it in so dignified and enviable a situation.

The first principle of the constitution was, that God himself was to be their legislator, judge and leader. This was putting them at once in a state of complete security against the errors of idolatry, the uncertainty of human decisions, and the power of their enemies. The next principle was, to

maintain among themselves the obligation of charity and justice, particularly as brethren. The laws enforcing this latter duty, were expressed in so many different ways, that it was impossibe not to understand them.

As to the laws relating to their conduct towards one another, that respecting the care of human life, is the most conspicious. Voluntary homicide was never to be pardoned. "Thou shalt take no commutation for the life of a murderer—he shall surely be put to death." This law extended to all sorts of people without distinction. And so careful was the constitution with respect to the life of man, that involuntary homicide, proceeding from carelessness in the perpetrator, where no real criminality was supposed, obliged him to fly to a city of refuge, where he was bound to remain till the death of the existing High Priest. If, previous to that time, he were found out of the city, the avenger of blood, that is, any relation of the deceased, who under tookto revenge the injury, might kill him with impunity. This was in appearance, a severe institution. But its tendency in favor of human life, is obvious. Nothing, perhaps, could have been more so.

It tended to preserve in the minds of the people, an habitual attention to the safety of one another. This prescribed attention served to strengthen more, perhaps than any other consideration,

the ties by which nature and the common constitution had connected them; and to keep alive by habitual action, the principles of benevolence and humanity, so necessary to the true ends of society.

By this law the life of man was estimated at an equal value, without any respect to difference of circumstances, as to riches or poverty, distinction or obscurity: the penalty of taking it away, was exacted with the same punctuality from every member of the community. No other government in the world has ever paid the same attention to so important a subject.

DEMOPHILUS.

The Sovereignty of the People—No. XII.

Democracy is the only constitution of government that God ever sanctioned.

IN whatever view we consider the Israelitish government, the excellencies peculiar to it must appear strong and impressive. It bears every character that can be considered as indicative of a most perfect knowledge, in the framer, of the wants of humanity, the obligations of charity, the true interests of society, and the best means of establishing it, on the only basis on which it can firmly stand, that of *mutual benevolence and justice.*

The establishment of the same ideas of God among the whole, without the liberty of deviating from any one character, which was fixed by the constitution; the same common formalities of divine worship, established by their own free consent, the obligation on the whole nation, to meet every year at their stated festivals, to celebrate the divine benefits to themselves in particular; the laws for perpetuating the same landed property in the family of the original owners, the festival of charity on every third year, the establishment of judges in every tribe, city, and village, for the decision of controversies, without fee or reward; the obligation on these judges to determine, in every case, according to the written law, word for word—the laws in favor of persons borrowing through necessity—those in favor of servants, of strangers, and even captives in war. In fine, the perfect balance of powers in the state, on one side, to guard against anarchy, and on the other, against oppression, are all such characters of a perfect government, and of a government instituted with equal regard to every member of the community, that I think we are not only obliged to acknowledge it to be of divine authority, but, except in regard to God himself, a true representative democracy. For, if it were not a democracy, let me ask the favor of any man to show me what it was! The constitution certainly never

contemplated any other king than God. The institution of the kingly government was reprobated by Samuel in the strongest terms; and terrible prodigies succeeded the criminal infatuated resolution of the people to have a king.

There were certainly no ranks of nobility in the state, unless any one should choose to say, that seniority was a rank of nobility; to prove which I think, would be an utterly absurd and desperate adventure. We may say, with as much propriety, that the old men among our northern Indians are nobles—for instance, Dukes, Earls, Marquises, &c. as that the Elders among the Israelites were an aristocracy. There is no term in the Hebrew language to express what we mean by aristocracy; and there is not, in the constitution, the shadow of such a corruption. Every thing there is humane and liberal.—The wants and conveniencies of the people at large, are alone consulted.—In every community the poor must, necessarily, make a large proportion of the whole; and that government is certainly the best, which makes the most effectual provision against the multiplication of persons of such a condition; and for their relief when they unavoidably take place.

Governments in general, take no notice of the poor; but leave them to shift for themselves, in the best manner they can. Benevolence, unauthorised by law, is their only hope; they may find

relief or not, just as those to whom they apply, are disposed to assist them, or not. An apple, a peach, or an ear of corn, may be refused to the most urgent necessity, and though life itself were at stake; and no law can oblige the possessor to yield the smallest pittance, to redress the most pitiable wants. It was far otherwise in the Jewish constitution.—Widely different from all other constitutions, benevolence, next to the worship of God, was its main and governing principle—it considered the common people as members of the community, equally with the rich.—Riches, indeed, were of no consideration there. It considered them as proofs neither of talents nor virtue; as benefits which, like the rains and sunshine, come equally to the evil and the good. So far as human exertions go, in the business of the world. I consider the mere talent for making money, as the meanest which a man can possess. It requires only a constant and minute attention to the main object; to suitable ways and means; to punctilio's of pence and farthings; and an incessant respect to objects, which a mind possessed of taste and sentiment, cannot possibly attend to. To this is often added, for the sake of the dear and favorite object, the sweat and blood of multitudes, to gratify the ambition or avarice of some wretch, who has no superiority of virtue or talents above the unhappy beings who are doomed to be

the ministers to the grossest passions that ever dishonored humanity. The Jewish constitution paid a dignified disregard to objects of such inferior importance; while other governments too commonly give indulgence to the meanest passions, by admitting with impunity, the most distressing violence of the strong against the weak, and the rich against the poor; that most humane and equitable constitution provided with particular care against such violations, by making them highly penal in the offenders, without respect to persons. Such is the condescending and tender regard which God himself has paid to the commonalty of mankind; while the haughty and unfeeling spirits of their own race, too often treat them as beings of an inferior order, who merit no better a condition; and aggravate the unavoidable ills of life by studied insult, or bestial apathy. But, while sympathy enjoys a sweet recompense, in suffering with those who suffer, whatever their condition: the ferocity of the cruel is accompanied with the torturing forebodings of avenging justice; and the insensibility of the apathic with oppressive insipidity, in the most favorable situation. Thus, accounts are so far balanced, even here. On the one side, we see cheerful hope, improving into relish every bounty of Providence; on the other, gloomy despondence, blasting with the breath of pestilence, the best benefits of heaven. Retributive justice

has not in reserve more fiery shafts of vengeance, than those which will finally transfix the unfeeling oppressors and tormentors of their fellow men. But to go on:—The following passages, enforcing the obligations of humanity, in the Israelitish code, while they afford an high gratification to those who are capable of sympathising with the indigent and unhappy, reflect shame and dishonor on all other governments; and indicate, that benevolence itself framed a constitution, in which the benefit of the meanest subject was contemplated, equally with that of the greatest. Nay, greatness, falsely so called; a mere shadow and delusion, was there entirely disregarded and unknown. But let us hear the law itself.

"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox, or sheep, go astray, and hide thyself from them; thou shall in any case, bring them again to thy brother"—Deut. xxii, 1, 2, 3, 4, 8. The precept in the 8th verse is peculiarly important, because the house top, which was flat, was for retired prayer, for airing in hot weather, and other necessary or convenient purposes. "Thou shalt not lend upon usury, to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals; usury of any thing that is lent upon usury"—Deut. xxiii, 19. An Israelite, notwithstanding, might lend on usury to an heathen neighbor.

"No man shall take the nether or upper mill-stone to pledge; for he taketh a man's life to pledge."—Deut. xxiv, 6. The importance of this law is obvious. They used hand-mills with two stones; such as are used in some parts of this country.

"When thou dost lend thy brother any thing, thou shalt not go into his house to fetch his pledge: thou shalt stand abroad; and the man to whom thou dost lend, shall bring out the pledge abroad unto thee; and, if the man be poor, thou shalt not sleep with his pledge," &c.—Deut. xxiv, 10, 11, 12, 13. "In this case, thou shalt deliver him the pledge again, even as the sun goeth down; that he may sleep in his raiment, and bless thee." "Thou shalt not oppress an hired servant that is poor and needy, whether he be of thine own brethren, or of thy strangers that are in thy land, within thy gates: at his day, (that is, the same day) thou shalt give him his hire; neither shalt the sun go down upon it, for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be sin unto thee."---v. 15. "Thou shalt not pervert the judgment of the stranger, nor of the fatherless, nor take a widow's raiment to pledge."---v. 17. "When thou cuttest down thy harvest in thy field, and hast forgotten a sheaf in the field, thou shalt not go again to fetch it: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless,

and for the widow: that the Lord thy God may bless thee in all the works of thy hands. When thou beatest thine olive-tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. When thou gatherest the grapes of thy vineyard, thou shalt not glean it after thee; it shall be for the stranger, the fatherless, and for the widow."—v. 19, 20, 21.

In these precepts humanity accompanied with the most perfect delicacy, displays the origin of the Israelitish constitutions to be more than human, by the unequalled regard it discovers to the most helpless and pitiable part of the human race. Even charity itself, is sometimes accompanied with circumstances so mortifying to those who are in want of its benefits, as almost to render them more distressing to the receivers, than the want of them could be. There is more cruelty often in doing a favor, than in denying it. The benignity of the precepts just mentioned, is intended to guard, as much as possible, against injuring the feelings of those whose necessities might compel them to depend on beneficence, rather than suffer the extremities of want. Bounty is, in reality, doubled in value, when it proceeds from a cheerful giver.

These remarks are made with particular regard to the case of taking a pledge—and I know of nothing in any system of laws, so charmingly ex-

pressive of that delicate humanity which is due to the distressed, and which is not so effectually expressed by the bounty itself, as by the sympathy of the benefactor. In this sympathy there is a consolation to suffering, which imports the best support that the necessities of nature will admit of, without the supplies they immediately require. It is, in a measure, food to the hungry, and clothes to the naked ; and reconciles the wearied stranger to repose himself on the naked earth, where charity cannot afford a better lodging.

DEMOPHILUS.

A FAIR STATEMENT.

NUMBER. I.

It has long given me extreme concern, and excited strong indignation, to read in the public prints, the most unjust, illiberal, and irritating abuse, that has been lavished on great numbers, of as tried patriotism as any in the nation, under the names of Democrats, Demagogues, Republicans, Anti-federalists, Disorganizers, &c &c.

They have been vilified and denounced as Democrats, by the members of a Democracy; as Republicans, by the members of a Republic; as Anti-federalists, by men who themselves wished to violate our federalism, by separating the eastern from the southern states; as Disorganizers, by men who wished to disorganize us, by breaking the unity of the nation. They have been denounced under the latter name, by a man, raised among ourselves, who, it is well known, previously to his obtaining the unmerited honor of a seat in the legislature of the nation, had taken strong measures

to disorganize the very state which raised him to importance.*

As to the charge of aiming at anarchy, and the subversion of order, it gave us much consolation, and made us think the better of ourselves; because we, knew that such reproaches were the common cant of the enemies of liberty always, and every where. We knew that a man†, whose memory ought to be for ever dear to Americans, and to all other people contending in the same cause, had been treated before us, with the same honor. "Are there not many, whose study it has long been to introduce disorder and confusion, to encourage tumults and seditions, to destroy all rule, and all authority, by traducing governments, despising dominion, and speaking evil of dignities, ? By assuming visionary and impracticable principles, as the only true foundation of a free government, which tend to raise discontents in the people, to harden some in actual rebellion, and to dispose others to follow their example?"‡

The offending passages of Dr. Price were these: "As far as, in any instance, the operation of any

* The same man has also most terribly demagogued the poor republicans; though he himself has candidly confessed, that his voracious appetite could never be satisfied with less than the demagogueship of the whole nation.

† Dr. Price. ‡ Bishop Lowth's Sermon on Ash Wednesday, 1779.

cause comes in to restrain the power of self-government, so far slavery is introduced."* "The representation must be complete: no state, a *part* of which only is represented in the legislature that governs it, is self-governed."†

For this illiberal abuse, the Bishop received severe but justly merited correction, from his particular friend, the amiable poet Hayley.‡

When we considered also the quarter from whence a great part of this abuse fell upon us, we felt not only very easy, but were confirmed in the opinion, that the cause we had espoused had never been obnoxious to any man, who had not strong reasons of state for disliking it.

One great offence given to those people, and in itself a mortal sin, is, that we professed ourselves to be attached to France. We were, from principle, attached to it, and, from the same principle, we are attached to it still: but, we are attached to it, not as a nation, but as a republic, founded on principles similar to our own. We were the more attached to it, as we saw it most furiously attacked by the combined despotisms of Europe, who were determined to overthrow it. And we were attached to it, most of all, as we believed that our existence as a Republic, in a great measure, if not

* Observations on civil liberty. † Additional observations.
‡ Elegy on the Ancient Greek mode, &c.

entirely, depended on the exertions it was making to support *itself*.

We had other reasons, which had, at first, and still have, great force in forming our attachments to the French Republic. From many considerations, we believed that the republican form of government was the most favorable to the several ends of the political association, which undoubtedly was the ground on which we gave the preference to that form, on erecting our independence: that God, who had originally " made of one blood, all the nations of men," would certainly, at some future time, abolish all those distinctions, which had so long subjected the great mass of mankind to the tyranny of a few, and for near six thousand years had caused the whole creation to groan and travail together in pain; and that this political redemption, so earnestly expected by the creation*, (whole human race) had commenced in the Eastern world, in the French revolution, and would go on, maugre all opposition, till all the despotisms of the earth were effectually overthrown, and one universal republic erected on their ruins, forever to subsist by the strongest of all ties, the ties of Christian Charity.

In the outset of this statement, I pledge myself to you, gentlemen, that my aim is not to irritate

* Romans, 8th Chapter.

the wounds of my country, but to assuage them; not to divide, but to unite my country-men in the most strenuous efforts to maintain our independence complete, against *all foreign influence, and all foreign violence whatsoever.* And this is my aim, because I am.

A TRUE REPUBLICAN.

May 10, 1793, *and* 22*d.*—23*d. of the Republic. Health and Fraternity!*

A Fair Statement—No. II.

THE federalists, that is, they who have wished to preserve the unity and indivisibility of the nation, have been charged with the piacular crime, of being jealous of government. They will neither deny the charge, nor attempt to evade it. Nay, they readily admit, that they have still their jealousies, and cannot, yet, see reasons to extinguish them. They well remember, that the former head servant of the nation, had denounced the federalism, when it lay an infant in the cradle, in suspense between life and death, by declaring that it had ever been a leading feature of republics, to be ungrateful to their benefactors, or words to that amount. But, the assertion was not, in fact, true: and, with respect to himself, his experience afterwards ought to have induced him to retract it; as no public servant, since the world began, had ever

been more amply rewarded for his services, if honor, gratitude, affection, and confidence, could be considered as rewards. Had money been his object, he might have had as much of that too, as he chose to ask, and as the nation could afford to give. But, he had no children, and had suffered nothing of consequence, in his estate, during the war; and being in no need, he relinquished all reward, except the highest place in the nation, and its attendant honors.

The federalists were jealous also, when they saw the same man, when advanced to the chair of state, fondly adopting into his family, all the unmeaning etiquette and parade of European courts; which gave them offence, not only as novelties, and absurdities, in a commonwealth; as tending to corrupt the simplicity of our manners, and auguring ill with respect to our future liberties; but, as calculated to effect a closer amity with the court of Britain, than could comport either with the dignity of our republican government, or the permanency of our independence. And the influence of these courtly measures, both in the manners and political opinions of the people at the seat of government, soon convinced them that their jealousies were but too justly founded.

They were rendered a little more jealous, by certain measures which followed close on the heels of the proclamation of neutrality. They thought

they saw something, which, notwithstanding the fair words of the proclamation, indicated a leaning inconsistent with our profession of impartiality, which could not escape the sagacity of our then enemies, or allies; and which could not fail of exciting the suspicion of the latter, in the same degree as it required labored explanation to defend it. And it unfortunately turned out, that the very language used to defend the government, in certain cases, on which explanation was required by our allies, served only to strengthen their fears, that our professions of attachment were not perfectly sincere.

But, what most of all kindled their jealousies, was the ever memorable treaty. The air of mystery which, from the beginning, had been spread over the whole of that business, could not fail of making them apprehensive, that something more was intended by government, than what was held out to the nation. They saw the constitution violated, by an extraordinary mission of a public officer of high rank, to a court, where we already had an ambassador fully competent to transact any business of the nation, and one who stood much higher in the estimation of the people, than the new appointment.

When they saw, at length, that the nation had been completely deceived; that it was, in their view, extremely degraded, by a compact with a govern-

ment that was laboring to ruin us; that had joined in base confederacy with the other monarchies of Europe, to subvert the young Republic of France, and restore the fallen monarchy; when they saw that our grievances were, by that compact, even accumulated, instead of being redressed; and when they further saw several of the most respectable memorials against it, treated with apparent contempt, if not resentment; and finally, when they saw it ratified, against the sense of a large majority of the people, and certainly against the real sense of a majority of the house of representatives; when, I say, the true federalists saw all these things, it was impossible for them not to be jealous, that some of the wheels of government were out of order.

Nor could they think themselves in the least blamable for the fears and jealousies they entertained; being conscious to themselves of a sincere and ardent love for their country; and a love, strengthened by ties, which many of those who have most cruelly traduced them, neither do, nor can feel.

And it will be hereafter shewn, that jealousies of public servants are not only innocent in themselves, but necessary to the very existence of republics.

A FEDERALIST.

May 11, 1798, *and* 22*d*—23*d year of the Confederacy, which may God preserve, pure and inviolate, for many years!*

A Fair Statement.—No. III.

The artificial word, Democrat, has been for some time in fashion, as a term of reproach for those members of the Democracy who entertained jealousies of administration, and thought themselves entitled to the right of believing, that several of our late public measures were impolitic, if not unjust. But, why should the Democrats, so called, be so grievously abused for their jealousies and suspicions? They have undoubtedly, the same right to think and judge for themselves, on every public measure, and every public servant, and to express what they think and judge, as any of those who so violently condemn them, and who use the same liberty, in justifying, without qualification, every state measure, both in form and principle. Besides, these jealousies and suspicions shew, that the people who entertain them are awake, and attentive to what concerns themselves and the nation: and they serve to controul the self-will of public servants, by keeping them in mind that they are amenable to those who have taken them into service, and who are to judge whether they act well or ill, in their respective stations. And they are so far from arguing a perverse and degenerate temper, unfriendly to the ends of government, and disposed to find fault, where there are no appear-

ances of error; that they rather discover, especially in Democracies, a generosity favorable to the common good, and a sensibility that is often connected with some of the best qualities of human nature.

The Athenians were, in most respects, as amiable a people as any upon earth; and yet, there never were so jealous and distrustful a people, with respect to their public characters.

"The people of Athens made good use of the talents of those who distinguished themselves by their eloquence and prudence: but they were full of suspicion, and kept themselves always on their guard, against their superiority of genius and ability: they took pleasure in restraining their courage, and lessening their way and reputation. This may be judged from the Ostracism, which was instituted only as a curb of those whose merit and popularity ran too high, and which spared neither the greatest, nor the most worthy persons. The hatred of tyranny and tyrants, which was, in a manner, innate in the Athenians, made them extremely jealous and apprehensive for their liberty, with regard to those who governed."*

I do not justify every thing which the Athenians did, under the excessive impulse of the love of liberty: but the principle itself was certainty founded

* Rollin's Ancient History.

on a just knowledge of human nature, and perhaps that of their own national character, in particular. And it was undoubtedly, on the same principle, that our own constitution has guarded against the abuse of talents, popularity, and the engrossing appetite of ambition, by the frequent change of public servants. This provision is one of the wisest parts of our constitution, and the most effectual check to the views of designing men, who would, if possible, rear the fabric of their own interest, though the ruins of their country should be the basis.

If the Democrats have been jealous, it was not through choice; for who would wish to make himself unhappy, and prefer distrust to confidence? Why should we wish to detect errors in government, if there were no grounds to suspect them? Or, why should we be willing to embarrass public measures, that appeared conducive to the public happiness, and consequently our own? Why should not we love our country, and wish to think well of our servants, and to trust their talents and integrity, and preserve our national honor and independence, as much as those who have charged us with the want of every virtue, and denounced us as unworthy of the American name, and as enemies to our own government, and to all government, under any form whatever? Many of us have borne our parts in the war which gained our independ-

ence, and possess property, whose value to us and our children depends on the propriety of public measures, and the general prosperity of the nation: while many of those who have loaded us with calumny, have done nothing for the country, either in the field, or in the cabinet; and others, not having a feather to lose, live only upon prospect, and chirp incessantly to government, like younglings in the nest, that they may be fed and fledg'd, from the treasure of the nation.

These latter have acted their parts with the more spirit, as they found the song they sung was grateful to the ear of power, and has, in some instances, been amply rewarded, by emoluments in the gift of Cæsar, but, at the cost of the nation. But, why should not such merit be rewarded, as was solely employed to strengthen the hands of power, and persuade the servants of the people to think ill of those who could suppose them capable of doing wrong, either intentionally, or by mistake?

If the Democrats have acted differently, why have they done so? They are certainly possessed of talents, as capable of versatility as others; they know the straight road to promotion, as well as others; and they are, perhaps, as sensibe as others, to the charms of secretaryships and foreign missions, &c. &c. If they have taken a side, in the public opinion; which must unavoidably exclude them from all reasonable hopes of attaining to pub-

lic honors and emoluments, they have not acted in the dark: they well knew what they were about. And, I think it is no more than charity demands, to presume, that they have as really acted from principle, as others, since the contrary cannot be proved.

A Democrat.

May 12, 1798 *and* 22*d*—23*d of the Democracy. Long live the Democracy!*

A Fair Statement—No. IV.

When a man has once allowed himself to traduce his neighbor, it generally happens that he goes on from charge to charge, till he is fairly spent with his own turmoil, or has exhausted every resource of invective: and the farther he is in the wrong the more keen and pertinacious he is to prove it on his adversary.

So, with respect to ourselves, charge has been accumulated upon charge, 'till calumny itself is almost out of breath, and language can furnish no more terms of scurrility and reproach.

We have been accused of the grievous crimes of disaffection to government, and hostility to religion; crimes, indeed of very different magnitude, but, most probably, in the opinion of some of our accusers, much the same; or if, in their estimation,

there be any difference, no doubt the former is the greater of the two.

That we have found fault with several measures of our public servants, we do not deny; not that we think there are errors in the constitution itself: but; he must be a profound statesman, indeed, who does not see a very material difference between being disaffected to administration, and the constitution; and between finding fault with the constitution, and being inimical to our country. It is well known that our constitution was received, in its present form, with much opposition; and it is certain that it would not have been adopted at all, but on the principle that it was subject to revisal whenever a certain proportion of the people should call for it. And many of these very men, who are now so generous in transfering *great powers* to the head servant of the nation, were among those who objected to the constitution, because it had put too much within the discretion of a single man whose real office ought to be *merely to execute the public will.* One single step beyond this and his character is changed from that of a servant to a master.

Nothing could be a severer invective on our national character, than to suppose we were so totally ignorant of human nature, as to invest any man whatever with the power of doing any thing, in which the interest of the nation was involved, upon

his own judgment and discretion. Power is accompanied with so many charms to flatter self-love, that no degree of virtue that we have ever seen, except in the first Messenger of Christianity, was ever proof against it. And it was certainly too favorable an opinion of our own national character, connected, I allow, with a principle amiable in theory, but never realized in practice, that prevailed on the people at large, to take the constitution as it now stands.

But we have had, in the short time of trying it, experience enough to evince the necessity of amending, and amending soon too, the errors we admitted, through mere charity for human nature: and I am the more easy under our present prospects, from the persuasion that they will operate to improve the constitution, and entirely erase from it those articles which have given our servants the powers that, in my opinion, have principally contributed to throw us into our present embarrassments.

To expect, indeed, a perfect constitution, would be to expect something which no trial of human wisdom could justify; though I believe the one we have formed, is attended with as few errors, as any that the world has ever seen: but it has its errors, which must either be corrected, and others will speedily grow out of them, and others again from

these, 'till our liberties will be irrecoverably lost, and so our last state be worse than the first.

And it would be equally contrary to all experience, to expect either perfect wisdom, or integrity, in those who are employed to transact the national business. Let us suppose them to possess as great talents and virtue, as have ever yet been found in men; unlimited confidence would only serve, first, to tempt them to exceed the powers intrusted to them; and then, involve the nation in trouble and confusion, as it is at this moment.

When disaffection arises in popular governments, it must always be presumed that there is, at least, apparent ground for it; for mankind are not disposed to find fault with their own works, nor very apt to complain, if they do not feel themselves aggrieved: nor is it, by any means, true, that they are generally averse to government, seeing that the most uncultivated nations in the world, have it in one form or another; and, I think there is good reason to believe, that the savage nations, as we are pleased to call them, of North-America, have as perfect a government as ourselves; and a form, I believe, much better suited to the true ends of the social connexion.

Allowing, then, that we have neither a perfect constitution, nor perfect men to exercise it, where possibly can be the crime of saying it? Or where

can be the crime of even saying, that some late errors of our government might have been avoided, by men of the most common talents, with a disposition to avoid them? I shall name two, the British treaty, and the late permission to arm our merchantmen. Thousands, of talents no doubt much inferior to those possessed by most of our public servants, have pointed out the error of both these measures, and expressed their disapprobation by the most forcible language.

No Disorganizer.

15*th May*, 1798—*Wisdom and integrity to our servants, and health and peace to our country!*

A Fair Statement—No. V.

"*Judge not, if ye would not be judged. For, by the judgment that ye judge, ye shall be judged: and by the measure that ye mete, shall measure be made to you again.*"

The Gospel.

He that undertakes to accuse another, ought to be pretty clear in himself, that the accusation cannot justly be retorted: for, how contrary soever it be, to the spirit of Christianity, the general custom of the world is, agreeably to my motto, to return like for like, measure for measure. But however justifiable it might be, in me, to take this advantage, I do not mean to take it.

The Devil himself, on an occasion something like the present, had better quarters than our accusers have given us: for, " Michael, the head of the Angels, (probably Christ himself) when debating with him, about the body (the laws and constitution) of Moses, did not presume to bring against him a railing accuation; but said—the Lord rebuke thee.*"

The adversary was a great advocate, like Mr. Burke, (not that democrat Ædanus†) for old establishments; and was extremely anxious for the permanency of the old Jewish constitution; knowing well, that, if that could be kept up, there would be no chance for the progress of Christianity.

We, too, are accused of hostility to religion, and merely because we are attached to the French Republic. To confute this charge, I shall attempt to shew that there is, probably, as much real religion in France, now, as there was under the prostrate establishment; that the constitution has done, with respect to religion, precisely what it ought to have done; and, that the said constitution is, in several views, more favorable to Christianity, than any state religion, now existing in Christendom.

* *Jude.* If I give you, now and then, a little divinity, I hope our zealous friends will like me the better.

† A respectable and patriotic judge of his State,

The first proposition can amount only to a probability; the two latter are capable of decisive proof.

Under the ecclesiastical establishment there was, indeed, a very precise form of religion, to which the people cheerfully submitted, because they believed it to be their duty, and necessary to their salvation. But, amidst all the parade of forms, it cannot be doubted, that infidelity, in secret, pervaded the body of the rulers, both in the civil and ecclesiastical departments; but the body of the people were really devout, as far as they knew.

The writings of Voltaire, d'Alembert, and a few others, had brought infidelity into fashion, among the great; who, though they conformed, for sake of decorum, to the state establishment, yet were, at heart, strongly opposed to Christianity.

It may justly be supposed, that the war has occasioned many irregularities, and immoralities, which always attend such a deplorable state of things, by taking off those restraints which the operation of the laws of the state lays upon the natural temper. Of this we have had proof enough, among ourselves, during and for some time after the late war. And the same thing happens every where, and cannot therefore, spring from national character, but the common character of mankind. I believe, however, that notwithstanding such appearances, wars do really produce good effects on

the minds of many. The fears and alarms, the confusion and devastation, and the loss of friends, as well as the terrors of death, bring many to serious reflection, which probably, in a state of peace, they would not have exercised. If France has a prosfligate soldiery, profligate magistrates, profligate philosophers, and profligate directors of the state, *they had them before*; and there is no civilized nation upon earth, that has not men, in every department of society, of profligate principles. If I could bring myself to believe it was not the case among ourselves, I should enjoy the persuasion with singular delight. But, however partial to my countrymen in other respects, as a citizen of the world, and more, as a friend of truth, I dare not say that we are better in principle than other people.

That the constitution of France has done, with respect to Christianity, precisely what it ought to have done, I have said was capable of decisive proof, and I proceed to maintain it.

It has totally abolished the old religious establishment, and left every man to maintain such doctrines, and to practise such modes of worship, as are most agreeable to his own judgement and conscience—a right which is agreeable to the universal sense of mankind, and to the whole tenor of the Gospel, which demands of every man, the care to "search and see," whether the doctrines it

proposes, are of God, or not. This most benevolent system of truth, asks no faith, and no service, that is not the result of persuasion, and of choice. An obedience founded merely on authority, or fear, it neither asks nor can receive. Neither does it any where require the aid of the civil power to enforce its demands, or to procure it respect. Nay, the Divine Author of our redemption, of inimitable excellence, and most venerable memory, charges his scholars to "call no man upon earth, Rabbi—for there is one (only) who is master, even Christ*." All his invitations and addresses to his hearers, to persuade them to become his scholars, are founded on argument, or rather evidence; and in no single passage of his life, is there any thing like compulsion, to bring converts to his doctrines.

No Enemy to Religion.

16*th of May*, 1798, *of the Christian era, and may this era soon be adopted by all the nations of the earth!*

* Matthew, Chapter 23d.

A Fair Statement—No. VI.

"Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did?"*

LUKE, 9th ch.

BESIDES, state-religions, under whatever form, are always oppressive to a part of the nation, that is the dissenting part, by excluding them from public honors and emoluments, and depriving them of certain other advantages, which it is the very design of the social compact to secure. Another evil is, that, by such invidious and unjust distinctions, the nation is divided from itself, and discord, uncharitableness, and a spirit of persecution, infallibly ensue; consequences equally injurious to the present and the future interests of mankind.

But, the strongest argument of all is—that every state-religion is an officious, nay, an impious intrusion on the prerogative of Christ himself; who, as head of the church, is sole Lord and law-giver over it, and never has authorized, nor ever will authorise, any body of men upon earth, to support his cause, by any other powers than those of conviction and persuasion. And he knows no more of the king of Britain, as head of the church, nor of the house of spiritual lords, nor of the most re-

* The French nation, and their well-wishers every where.

verend father in God, his grace archbishop of Canterbury in these characters, than he does of Buonaparte, or the French Directory.

The French constitution, then, by restoring to every man the inalienable right of judging for himself, in all matters of religion and leaving Christianity to operate by its own powers only, has been framed with profound policy and justice.

My third proposition, that the present constitution of France is, in some respects, more favorable to Christianity, than any state-religion now existing, is as capable of proof, as the former. All state-religions have always the effect of impeding the progress of truth, by restraining free enquiry and discussion. Whatever doctrines or modes of worship the civil power has established, are considered as the standard, by which all opinions are to be tried; and every deviation from it is condemned, as heresy, and the criminal adjudged to suffer such deprivations, and penalty, as the state has annexed to the case. In England, it is in the power of the head of the church, for the time being, whether king or queen, to forbid the clergy from preaching any particular doctrine that he or she may think proper; or even preaching or publishing any thing at all on controverted points.

Now, it must be obvious to every man, that this is directly calculated to confine the minds of the people within one narrow circle of ideas, which may

happen to be right or wrong, according to the views of those who establish the national faith. But, Christianity requires that our faith and worship should result from our own views, unbiassed by the authority of others, and of all worldly considerations whatsoever.

Further, state-religions tend to destroy the dignity and influence of the sacerdotal character, by making it dependent on the civil power. Every dignified clergyman in England, is as much an officer of the crown, as an admiral, or general, or any other civil or military officer in the kingdom. The king confers on him his commission, and can suspended or break him, * whenever he thinks proper. And every bishop, by virtue of his episcopal office, becomes a lord spiritual, and entitled to a seat in the second estate of the nation. But, the clerical office, agreeably to the constitution of the Gospel, knows nothing of the civil power; but depends solely, either on the special nomination of Christ, which was the case with the Apostles; or on that of the church, which is the case among ourselves. By this act of violence in the state, the true honor of the spiritual office is lost, in the exterior honors of the secular character; and the influence which would naturally attend the former, and is necessary for accomplishing its proper ends,

* Except the bishop of Sodor and Man.

is prevented by the latter. These political religions serve also to corrupt the clergy, by laying them under a strong temptation to accommodate both their preaching and manners, to the taste of the government which supports them. And this is so true, that if you can only know what are the fashionable principles of a court, you may pretty certainly judge what are the principles of the clergy who are connected with it; at least of the largest part. And this must ever be expected to be the case; because, the clergy, as men, are subject to the common infirmities of men; and are equally liable with others, to be tempted with the honors and powers which are offered them by the state. This, indeed, ought not to be the case: but it is the case; and we must argue, not on speculation, but on facts. The state-religion, therefore, that lays this temptation, does violence to the Gospel, by bribing its servants, and so far obstructing the great ends intended by the Christian priesthood.

In addition to this, all these establishments hold out strong temptations to men to assume the clerical office, without the qualifications requisite to the duties attending it. This is not the case equally with all of them. But, it is well known that, under that of England, almost any man, if he have gone through a certain course of learning, and can obtain a patron to recommend him, may not only be invested with the office, but rise to the

highest rank it admits of. This, it is granted, may be the case under any constitution of the church. Some, who are too indolent to pursue other occupations; others who wish for a station favorable to literary pursuits; and others, through the mere ambition of influence and distinction, may every where, intrude themselves on the sacred office. In this case, the fault lies in themselves alone; but it remains with the church, whether to take them into office, or not; and the grievance, with respect to the people, is so much the less, as they can receive them, or reject them, at pleasure. This circumstance is the best provision that human affairs will admit of for an honest and faithful ministry; and it is precisely that which the Gospel has made.

AN ENEMY TO STATE-RELIGIONS.

17*th May*, 1798—*An end to all State-Religions!*

A Fair Statement—No. VII.

"My kingdom is not of this world."
CHRIST.

ANOTHER great evil attending these establishments is, that the Christian institutions, under their management, become the mere instruments of worldly policy; an object as wide from their true designs, as heaven is from earth. In some instances, this is so grossly the case, that one of the most characteristic ordinances of the Gospel, is made the test of allegiance to the state. Under the English establishment, the most profligate man in the three kingdoms, on receiving a civil or military commission from the crown, is obliged, before he can act upon it, to take the sacrament, upon his knees, in some parish church. And should any conscientious clergyman refuse to give it, in such a case, he would at least be liable to suspension from his office. But, let the case be what it may, in which any doctrine, or office of the gospel, is condemned to be a menial to merely worldly views, it is not only stript of its proper honors, and degraded in the eyes of mankind, but, becomes in the same degree injurious, as it would have proved beneficial, when used according to the views of its benevolent institutor. He himself, with a view to remove all suspicion of aiming at

any interference with the rights of Cæsar, or any other secular prince, openly declared, that "his kingdom was not of this world;" not founded on worldly principles, nor managed by worldly maxims; but ultimately intended to perfect mankind, in virtue and happiness, in a better life. To take, in this manner, the peculiars of Christ, and make them the drudges to some of the most corrupt and perverse passions of human nature, is to do him an indignity, which he will certainly resent; and for which, they who are guilty of it, will probably have to give a very serious account.

To the evils already mentioned, of state religions, I will add one more, and that is, that they are generally as hostile to civil liberty, as they are to the genius of Christianity. The general reasons of this must be obvious to every body; but I shall mention one, because it is immediately to my purpose—it is this, that they take care to secure the influence of the clergy on the side of power; who, be the establishment how oppressive soever, have too much gratitude not to engage in its behalf.

When the question of the American war was agitated in the British parliament, there was but one man, who came forward with a true *Athenian* spirit, of all the spiritual lords of the kingdom, to oppose the unrighteous measure of subjugating us, by military power, to the inhabitants of a little island, three thousand miles from us. That wor-

thy man, entitled to perpetual remembrance, was *Jonathan Shipley*, bishop of St. Asaph, one of the poorest bishopricks in the kingdom.

Among others, on the side of oppression, was Lowth, bishop of London; a man of singular merit in sacred literature, and distinguished for still more excellent qualities than those of a scholar. But, influenced by the blandishments of honor and authority, derived from the state, he, most dishonorably to his character, as a Christian priest, denounced, with all the petulancy of an officer of the crown, the sacred cause, which, as a Christian minister, he ought to have supported, at the price of life.

But, he was well chastized, in a poem already mentioned*, addressed to himself:

——————" Can flatt'ry's tide
Drown thy free spirit, and thy Attic pride?
Is this the man who spoke, in language strong,
The praise of liberty's Athenian song?
Blest are her notes; but curst the sordid things,
That priestcraft offers to the pride of kings.
For never, never, shall fair freedom's hand,
Enroll one prelate in her sacred band.

* * * * * * * * * *

————Servility's oblivious weed:
High in the court's rank soil that creeper winds,
And oft with dark embrace the Crosier binds;
While, squeez'd from thence, the subtle prelate flings
Its luscious poison in the ear of kings."

* No. 1.

And so it will ever be, till the generous power of republican governments shall every where dissolve that unnatural and pernicious combination, which hath so long subsisted, between the church of Christ and the powers of the world. Then, and not till then, will Christianity display all its true powers, and diffuse over the world all its benign effects. Checked by the opposing spirit of monarchies, aristocracies, oligarchies, and the state-religions connected with them——modified and managed, by the partial and ever-erring devices of human wisdom; and compelled to serve the low purposes of the avarice and ambition of civil rulers, it has almost ever appeared distorted and discolored. But, under the operation of a form of government that will leave it to itself, it will resume the beauties and vigor of its first estate, and captivate all the nations of the earth, to its embraces.

I have dwelt the longer on this subject, for sake of some honest and pious people, who have *really* been apprehensive for Christianity, on account of the French constitution; which they mistakenly supposed had quite abolished it, in the nation. But, I hope the short detail I have given, may, in some measure, contribute to quiet their fears, and vindicate the republic from the charges of unreasonable men, who cloak their hostility to the nation, under the transparent pretext of zeal

for religion. Be it so—they will never obstruct the progress of republicanism, by any efforts they can make, whether open or concealed. It has begun its career, and, by the statute of heaven, it must go on.

AN ENEMY TO STATE-RELIGIONS.

18*th May*, 1798.—*May all state-religions be speedily abolished!*

A Fair Statement—No. VIII.

"*Tempora mutantur, et nos mutamur in illis.*" *As the times change, so do we.*

IT is a lamentable trait in the character of mankind, that their opinions are more generally determined by circumstances, than the truth of things; and this is most remarkably the case in matters of politics and religion. It has long been the universal opinion of the divines of the reformed church, that the power designated in the New Testament, by the "wicked one," the "man of sin," &c. &c. was the Roman Papacy; and I think there can be little doubt, that this is the true interpretation.

But since a republic has been erected at Rome, which is the place where the principal prophecies of the book of the Revelation appear to centre, and the Pope himself cut down to the common stature of men, a quite new, and very different application has been made of those passages.

A profound prophet of our own, who has lately made a book at New-York, has found out, after, I suppose long and *very hard* study, that the French nation, and no other, is "that man of sin," who has so long remained undiscovered. It would be a perfect waste of time, to attempt to confute so whimsical and forced an interpretation; but because the author's scheme has met with approbation, and will, no doubt, meet with admirers, wherever the present order of things in France is reprobated; I shall make a remark or two on some quotations from it, given in the New-York Diary;* to show how far we are to regard it. First, if the author speaks of "the men of sin," as the Diary says, he speaks very inaccurately. The words of the Apostle are—"O anthroopos tees amartias—*that man* of sin."†

Next, he supposes that the French will make a terrible use of the power they have gained, for eighty years to come; soon after which the personal reign of Christ will commence with great glory: and yet, he supposes that men will grow worse and worse from this time; so that, when "Christ comes, he will hardly find faith on the earth." How his reign is to commence with great glory, when there will scarcely be any faith on the earth; the author himself, may be best able to determine.

* See the City Gazette for the 4th instant.

† 2 Thess ii. 3. O uios tees apooleias, that son of perdition.

He has also I think, entirely misunderstood the passage, Luke, xviii. 8. The coming of the son of man, there mentioned, appears particularly to intend the destruction of Jerusalem, and dissolution of the Jewish nation; and I read the passage with the verb *find*, in the future affirmative, instead of the interrogative, thus—" nevertheless, or yet, when the son of man cometh, he will find faith in the land" of Judea. That is, the severity of the persecutions which would be raised against his disciples, should not utterly extirpate them; but some would be found maintaining the faith, even in that extreme state of things, when it would be necessary to avenge them amply, on their enemies; from which consideration by the beautiful parable of the importunate and persevering widow, he encourageth his disciples to persevere in prayer and confidence, till the time of their deliverance.

The doctrine of the personal reign of Christ upon earth, though not hinted at, so far as I can see, by any passage in the whole of the Scriptures, has long been a stumbling block, in the way of very pious, but fanciful Christians; and has been always attended with the great inconvenience, of leading the advocates of the said doctrine, to make the Scripture prophecies bend to their own fancy, rather than to follow their genuine sense, whithersoever it leads. Indeed, when a man has once taken it into his head, to write about the Millen-

nium, whatever honor we ought to give to the goodness of his heart, we are not at all bound to think with equal respect of his head. The most sober divines, and most accomplished scholars, that I have ever met with, acknowledge, that nothing can yet be determined with any certainty, concerning those high, but mysterious subjects: and that the Millennium probably means no more than some extraordinary period of the church's prosperity.

However, when a man sits down to interpret the Scripture for others, he is, at least, bound to divest himself, as far as possible, of all prejudice; and to propose nothing with certainty, or confidence: on subjects of acknowledged obscurity, such as most, or many of the prophecies are. This author's scheme, reminds me of a conversation I had, at the North, with an enthusiast, in the year 1783. Conversing on this very subject, he told me, it was his opinion, that he himself and Sir Jeffery Amherst, were the two witnesses, mentioned in the Revelation: and I think he was quite as near the truth, as our prophet.

I have been the more induced to make these observations, from a very serious caution given by Christ himself, to those who are addicted to the humor of interpreting the prophetic parts of the Revelation. " If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that

are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and the things which are written in this book."

The progress of the French revolution is so unpromising to state-religions, that it cannot fail of raising the bile of all who are interested in their continuance: and I am ready to believe that the body of the British prelates, in particular, since the operation lately performed on the vicar of St. Peter, are strongly apprehensive that a similar chirurgy may shortly be performed on themselves: and, really, I think, they have good ground for such an apprehension. *Hinc illæ lacrymæ*: this it is that makes them weep. It is this, chiefly, that hath so long defeated every attempt of the English dissenters to obtain a little relief from the unrighteous grievances under which they labor. And the opposition has been principally made by the clergy of the establishment. They were apprehensive, that, if the ark were once touched, though it were only with the little finger, it might be overset, and the sacred treasure it contained, spilled like water on the ground.

It was this that so miserably shattered the brains of poor Edmund, and thence brought forth, with infinite anguish of the parent, that monstrous birth which all the friends of liberty beheld with horror:

It soon perished, by its own deformities. Alas, poor Edmund! And it is this more than any other cause, that hath so sharpened against the infant republic of France, the tongues, and pens, and swords of the surrounding despotisms, and drenched the soil of Europe with the blood of its inhabitants, and fattened it with their flesh.

AN ENEMY TO STATE-RELIGIONS.

May 22, 1798—*No State-religions!*

A Fair Statement—No. IX.

"*When ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for, they* must *be.*"

CHRIST.

WAR is surely one of the greatest calamities that God ever permitted to fall upon mankind, for the punishment of their sins; and no man possessed of the true sensibilities of humanity, can think of it, without horror. But, like every other evil, it is rather to be estimated by the consequences that result from it, than the sufferings that attend it. When the former become more beneficial to society, than the previous state of peace, it is a real good; when they are more injurious, it is a real evil. And this, I think, is the test by which our opinions on the case, are to be determined as just, or the contrary.

When there were some grounds to apprehend that we should be driven to war with the British government, for its plunder of our property, impressment of our seamen, and various insults offered to the neutrality and honor of our nation, the most lamentable outcries were raised, from one extremity of the union to the other; and nothing was then heard of, but devastation, and burning, and bloodshed, and the wailings of widows, and the tears of orphans. And it was thought better to stoop to the dishonor of compacting with the lawless power that oppressed us, than to demand an immediate, and complete redress of our wrongs, though war should be the means of obtaining it. Had we resolutely adopted the measure, our situation, I am persuaded, had, at this moment, been infinitely better, in all respects, than it is, or probably, can be, for years to come. Our now imaginary national prosperity had then been real; and our faded honors had yet maintained their native bloom. Then our real fears of an imaginary war, wasted the flesh from our bones, and consumed our sinews, and shrunk us to the thin, unsubstantial forms of men; so that "there was no longer any life remaining in us, and we became as dead men." But now, the mere *idea* of a war with the French Republic, has rekindled our extinguished life, and reclad our bones with the ruddy flesh of youth, and ton'd our sinews with the strength of

manhood; and rear'd us, in a moment, from pygmies of three spans, to the giant stature of Goliah, "whose height was six cubits and a span;" and covered us with his impenetrable panoply. "And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a gorget of brass between his shoulders.* And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron." Thus fortified without, and inspired within, we are provoking our enemy to the conflict; and, confident of conquest, we are crying to them aloud, "Come to us, and we will give your flesh to the fowls of the air, and the beasts of the field."

Already the trumpet hath sounded to the fight; the earth groans beneath the weight of our marching armies, whose shouts have pierced the ear of the wide welkin; while our banners stream from St. Mary's to the district of Maine, giving new lustre to the day, and our burnished arms dazzle the strong eye of heaven.

Already our brave warriors have conquered, by land; and thousands of the dastardly foe, to our unspeakable joy, fiercely bite the ground, to "dig themselves dishonorable graves;" while our

* On the forepart of his neck, or throat, to save his wind-pipe.

invincible thundering navy has triumphed on the ocean, and the tri-colored flag droops over a thousand decks, beneath the American eagle. Already our ports are choaked with their captured fleets, and our warehouses are glutted with their treasures, and we are saying within ourselves, "what shall we do, because we have no room where to store up our goods? This we will do; we will pull down our barns, and stores, and build greater; and then we will store up all our fruits, and our goods. And we will, every one of us, say to our soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry."

This, to our shame, my countrymen, is but a fair paraphrase of the true spirit of many of our public speeches, and some of our late public measures. War, war, is resounded, from the chair of our first servant,* down through the different

* I have used the term, head servant, not through affectation of singularity, but, as according to the true sense of the constitution. I might have said—"High on the pinnacle of the dome stands Columbia's favorite son, the effulgent emanation of the people, (if any body upon earth can tell what it means) a faithful mirror, to represent to every part, the reflected will of the whole; as the public organ, to promulgate the concentred view of the nation, (an organ to promulgate a concentred view!) as the vigilant centinel, placed in the highest watch tower, (a sentry box, I suppose, on the summit of the dome) to sound the alarm when danger menaces." Cicero, or Demosthenes, have nothing comparable to this.

ranks of office, to a thousand little assemblies of the people. And, I blush to think, that the legislature of the union, has so far adopted the language of braggadocio, as to outrage every man who contends for peace, on honorable terms. Matters, in that body, have come to such a pitch, that he who talks of accommodation, and peace with France, is denounced, and vilified, as a coward, and traitor, a friend to France, and an enemy to his country. Even Mr. Dayton, the speaker, has adopted the new style of calumny; and, though, *ex-officio*, appointed to maintain order and decorum, in that house, has more egregiously violated it, than any other member. His reply to a late speech of Mr. Gallatin, a speech which would not have disgraced any man in the union, was equally beneath the character of a soldier, and a gentleman: a reply which indicated, in the strongest terms, that Mr. Dayton, however qualified to command at the head of a regiment, or however brave in the attack of an enemy, has not all the integrity, that the place of a Speaker of the House of Representatives, requires. A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

24*th May*, 1798. *Health and fraternity!*

The author of this *burnish*, was the first among ourselves, who opened the academy of scandal against the friends of France; from whence have issued so many accomplished scholars in the science of political calumny. But, he has obtained his reward, and is now reposing his limbs, wearied with the toils of Congress, in the fragrant shades of the Orange and Lemon groves of L - - - - n

A Fair Statement—No. X.

"*When ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for, they* must *be.*"

CHRIST.

IF we go to war with France, the fault, I believe, will be chiefly our own. At present, I see no strong appearances of war, except on our part. Many of us seem quite intent upon it; and, from appearances, would be very glad of it. Some, who remained here since the war—others, who have taken their lot among us, since the peace, finding our country to be "a land of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of vallies and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates—a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass:"—others, who are connected with Britain, by nativity, and interest; and some among ourselves who have *secret hard reasons* for being attached to that country; and some from a sincere patriotism—have united their efforts to break with France, that they may draw the cord of amity with Britain a little tighter, and stronger.

Great cause, absolute cause for war with France—and, if we do not make war on that na-

tion of infidels, and atheists, we shall not only commit our national honor, but shall be "partakers with them in their sins."

But, my brave countrymen, before you engage in so *hard* a business, consider whether you have sufficient grounds to expose yourselves to all its inconveniencies, and hazards; and whether you are, in other respects, provided for it.

"For, which of you intending to build a tower, sitteth not down first, and counteth the cost, whether he have sufficient to finish it? Lest haply, after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all that behold it, begin to mock him, saying, this man began to build, and was not able to finish. Or, what king going to make war upon another king, sitteth not down first, and consulteth whether he be able, with ten thousand men, to meet him that cometh against him with twenty thousand."

Your courage is not the point in question; that has been already tried, and fully evinced to the world. Neither is it questionable, whether, in case of an invasion of our country, we shall be united to defend it, as well against France, as any other nation. Whatever difference of opinion there may be, as to our public measures, or public characters, or the affairs of France, when matters come to the last extremity, and hard necessity compels us to harness ourselves in armour, there can

be no doubt that our present animosity will subside, and our strength and resolution be *compacted*, for our common safety. In this case, I am persuaded, that even those who, for their professed attachment to the French Republic, and aversion to go to war with it, have been stigmatized as cowards, poltroons, villains, traitors, and whatever else the envenomed tongue of calumny could utter, though wounded to the quick by such unprovoked wrongs, will stand at any post of danger, where any of their traducers will *dare* to stand.

But why need we provoke the rage of war, by the language of incivility, which humanity and decorum require should be as punctiliously avoided between nations, as individuals; by bitter reproaches and invectives, degrading to our republican dignity; by proclaiming our courage, and betraying something like an eagerness to bring it to the trial? Such conduct can only serve to irritate our allies, and make them think of us with less respect; but certainly will not intimidate them into measures of peace, or to redress the wrongs they have done us, if they are not moved to it by other considerations.

I have seen with pain, our public speeches teeming with resentment, a resentment first kindled in the first department of administration, against a sentiment suggested by Barras to Mr. Munroe, on his taking leave of the republic. It

was barely this—that he knew how to distinguish between the people of America, and the government. The sentiment was founded on unquestionable fact. At that time, a large proportion of the nation was really opposed to certain measures of government. But, had it even been as false, as it was certainly true, I cannot possibly see what just ground it could be, for all the offence that it has given; or what injury, in any view, it could do the nation. Did not we ourselves do much more than this, at the commencement of our revolution? Did we not try, both by persuasion and force, to detach the Canadians entirely from Britain? And did we not address the people of Ireland, and Britain, with the express design of interesting them in our behalf, against the measures of the government they were under? Say it was an appeal: but, it was an appeal intended to operate in our favor.

The opinion of Barras, instead of discovering the least hostility to us, proves, I think, strongly, that the French Republic was attached to us, and desirous of our attachment to them; and were glad to find that the measures of our government, which seemed to operate against them, were not approved of by the nation at large. This, I think, is a construction which truth and justice oblige us to make, on the aforesaid declaration; and truth and justice are due to even an enemy, as much as

to a friend. Yet, this little circumstance, so inoffensive in itself, and which was not deserving of the least notice, has caused such a redundancy of bile in our stomachs, that nothing but the *emetic of war* is judged strong enough to evacuate it. But, if such trifles are sufficient grounds of war, which one would judge to be the case, from the bustle we have made on the occasion; then we are never to expect peace among the nations of the earth; because such things may happen among the most peaceable and inoffensive of mankind; and wars, perpetual wars, are to rage, and desolate the world, till the consummation of time.

A Citizen of the World.

25*th May*, 1798—*Fraternity with all men!*

A Fair Statement—No. XI.

"*When ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for, they* must *be.*"

Christ.

Our zeal for the progress of republicanism, has subjected us to another very grievous charge of our accusers; and that is, that we are enemies to the tranquillity of the world, and enjoy the spectacle of misery which accompanies revolutions, with calm delight, and exultation. We are not enemies to the tranquillity of the world; nor do

we enjoy any spectacle of misery, in any form in which it can be presented. Nay, we shudder, with as quick a sensibility, at the sight of human wretchedness, as any of those who affect to be "tremblingly alive all over," and yet would precipitate their country, into all the horrors of war, without proposing one single advantage to indemnify us for the devastations that must attend it.

We sympathize with all our suffering brethren of humanity, and should rejoice, with unmixed pleasure, to see a perpetual end to every form of human wretchedness. But, as we believe that an universal revolution in society is necessary, in order to replace it on its primitive foundation, by destroying despotism in every form in which it afflicts humanity, we exult in the prospect which is now opened, of effecting so desirable and glorious an event.

Let the affected friends of order, good government, old establishments, &c. &c. say what they please, on the blessings of tranquillity and peace, we are bold to say, that war, universal war, for a time, is more desirable than peace with perpetual tyranny, and its attendant miseries.

The times, say these men, are portentous, terribly portentous—times, such as the race of men hath never seen before. But, in what are they portentous? In what are they different from all the past ages of the world, except in this, that they

portend the downfall of tyranny, and throw a sable cloud on the prospects of ambition? Has not war raged, in every age of men, since Cain, by the murder of his more righteous brother, first broke the peace of the world, and transmitted his own spirit of maliciousness to successive generations?

Are the devastations of war, and the dissolution of empiries, and the overthrow of nations, novelties in the records of mankind? What age, that has not been ingulphed in oblivion, is without its mouments of erased cities, and desolated contries? And on what inhabited part of the earth does the sun look, without witnessing the instruments of human carnage and destruction? Where has not the earth trembled, under the shouting of contending armies and drunk in the blood of thousands, slain by the sword of war? Where have not tyrants been plucked from their thrones, and nobles stript of their honors, and either blended with the common mass of mankind, or dispatched to the tribunal of eternal justice, to stand trial for their enormities and oppressions?

What has become of the great monarchies of the East, which made the world tremble at their nod: the Assyrian, Babylonian, Persian, Median, Egyptian, and the all-sovereign empire of Rome? They are certainly fallen—but, how did they fall? Have they mouldered away under the slow-eating canker of time; or been arrested by the violent, and

devastating arm of war? By the destroying arm of war. And to this day, through the whole extent of their once wide and boasted territories, monuments remain, of the hands by which they have fallen, never to rise again.

And yet, we wonder, even to stupefaction, to hear of "wars, and rumours of wars;" as if they were novelties in the world, and heaven and earth were astonished at such portents.

We seem to realize, in the warmth of our imaginations, those dreadful times when "the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon shall not give her light, and the Stars of Heaven shall fall, and the powers of Heaven shall be shaken."

But, what is the difference between the present times, and the past? The difference is obvious, and is the true reason of all the lamentation, and wailing, and woe, which we now hear from so many quarters. Formerly, the desolating wars of the earth were managed by a few, for the mere purposes of ambition, and avarice, against the mass of mankind. Now, the wars of Europe are conducted by the people, against opposing tyrants, a few kings, and queens, and emperors, the enemies of the repose and rights of the long oppressed and despised commonalty.

This is the only difference, between the former and the present times; and this alone is the cause of all the outcries which have been raised

in Europe, and among ourselves, against the French revolution, and those which have followed it.

In my next number it will be shewn, that no event of extensive importance to society hath ever taken place, without great and terrible temporary convulsions, and calamities.

A Citizen of the World.

May 26, 1798—*The universal rights of men!*

A Fair Statement.—No. XII.

I proceed to shew, that, no event of considerable importance to society, hath ever been effected, without great concomitant calamities; and this seems to be an established order of that Providence which manageth, with unerring wisdom, the whole series of human things. And the following facts, it is presumed, will evince the truth of the assertion.

When the first race of mankind had arrived to that state of wickedness, that "the earth was corrupt before God, and violence, that is, tyranny, filled the earth;" in order effectually to destroy it for that time, it pleased God, to extirpate, by an inundation, all the inhabitants, except eight persons, who were preserved, with a view of continuing the human race, without another creation. The calamities attending that memorable event, must have

been as great as we can possibly conceive, particularly, if we suppose that the world was then, as populous as it is at present; which, it has been conjectured by some, was really the case. The importance of this revolution, however terrible in itself, no doubt, consisted in the destruction of an abandoned race of men, who, had they been permitted to continue, would, probably, have transmitted their enormities to succeeding generations; and entailed on posterity, vices and calamities, much greater than their utter extirpation.

The release of the Israelites from Egypt, is another event which strongly marks the doctrine I have proposed. The family of Jacob, in consideration of the great benefits which had been rendered to the Egyptians, by Joseph, had been invited to settle in that country, in the most fertile part of it, and promised by the king, all the privileges and immunities of free citizens. In process of time, however, their great population, and prosperity, stimulated the envy and fears of a succeeding king, Palmenothes, who loaded them with every practicable grievance; and proceeded, at length, with a view effectually to extirpate them, to drown all their males as fast as they were born. This was a most grievous cruelty in itself, and a violation of an express and solemn stipulation. In process of time, when God had determined to release them from the cruelties they endured, Moses

and Aaron were sent, to demand, in the name of Jehovah, their deliverance.

Ten most grievous plagues were sent upon the nation, before the obstinate king would consent to their departure.

At length, when the first-born of man and beast were, in one night, destroyed through the land, the Israelites were importuned to depart, with all haste—which they immediately did, enriched with the goods of their oppressors.*

But, scarcely had they taken their departure, when the perfidious monarch, grieved at the loss of so many useful subjects, and chagrined at having been compelled to release them, collected the whole force of Egypt, chariots and horsemen, and pursued them, determined utterly to destroy them, or to force them back again to bondage.

About ninety miles from the place of their departure, while entangled by the Western gulph of the Red Sea on their left, by the Arabian mountain on their right, and the inundation or inlet of Pihahiroth† in their front, the rear of the Israelites beheld their pursuers.

* With respect to this fact, it has been frequently alledged, against the Israelites, that they deceived the Egyptians, by pretending to borrow, what they never intended to restore. But, the truth is, that they did not borrow at all; but demanded a recompense, which was justly due to them, for the trials and hardships they had sustained: and the Egyptians were glad to get clear of them, on any terms.

† Stoma Eirooth.

In this dreadful dilemma, the whole line* was commanded to face to the left, while the water parting, opened them a passage, through which they marched dry-shod to the opposite shore; from whence they beheld their blinded pursuers overwhelmed, to a man, by the hostile waves.

Never, since the all-destroying deluge, had any nation of men, experienced such destructive, and appropriate calamities, as the Egyptians, from their waters turned into blood, till the utter destruction of the whole military force of the kingdom. Of this last event, it is worthy of remark, that travellers find, to this day, the tradition of this circumstance among the inhabitants of the place where it happened.

Connected with this event, in the series of their history, is the entrance of the Israelites into Canaan. This country was called the Land of Promise, not only because it had been promised by God to the descendants of Abraham; † but, probably, as in an original survey given to Noah, it had been particularly allotted to this branch of his family. That this was really the case, I think is strongly probable, from the following words of

* The men marched five in a rank, and the line of march must therefore have been very long.

† Though Abraham, on his call from his native country, lived in Canaan, he had no possessions there, but what he purchased; not even so much land as he could cover with the soal of his foot—Acts vii, 5.

Moses to them, in his last address: "When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance; when he separated the sons of Adam; he set the bounds of the people, according to the number of the children of Israel."—Deut. xxxii, 8.

The Canaanites, therefore, were usurpers; and this, probably, was the cause of the consternation which seized them, when they found the Israelites were approaching.

A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

May, 1798—*Peace to the whole earth!*

A Fair Statement—No. XII.

APPENDIX—PART I.

To John Adams, Chief Servant of the United States of America.*

SIR,

WHILE your integrity and self-command are standing the severest trial, by multiplied addresses from your countrymen, permit an individual to speak to you, who is equally incapable of flattering, of envying or of injuring you

I am a native of America, and bore a part in the trials which purchased our independance, and

* "Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority over them. But, it shall not be so among you: but whosoever would be great among you, let him be your servant; and whosoever would be chief among you, let him be your servant—the servant of all." CHRIST.

have raised you to the dignified station where you now stand. Bearing no office under government and perfectly unambitious of political honors, my time is pleasantly employed in the culture of the earth, the best offices of humanity, and the calm pursuits of literature and science.

Notwithstanding this privacy of my condition, I take a deep concern in all the revolutions of the great world, and feel myself particularly interested in those of them, which involve the interests of the country, to which, both by the ties of nativity, and the stronger ties of political opinion, I am firmly and forever bound.

You came Sir, to the arduous office which you now bear, under almost balancing advantages and inconveniences. You come to it with all the advantages of acknowledged talents, firmness, and patriotism. But, you also came to it, under the suspicion of political opinions not perfectly republican; of a predilection for excutive powers, stronger than could comport with a democratic constitution; and of attachments to a foreign court, which your countrymen were apprehensive might entangle you, and the nation you have the honor to serve, in schemes of policy disconnected with our real interest. With myself, sir, your private opinions, whatever they might be, were of no weight; while I considered, that not these, but the constitution of the nation, was to be your guide, in

all your official measures; and especially, while I persuaded myself, that you felt the authority of morality and of conscience, too strongly, to suffer, in any instance, your own judgment or will, to dictate your course of action.

By the error of your predecessor, to use a phrase of one of your inferior fellow-servants, you found the state vessel, " thrown up into the wind," and entangled with shoals, and sharp pointed rocks, on every quarter. And I have often thought with admiration, on the courage which could press you, through such vissible embarrassments, to take the helm, which had been abandoned, perhaps, thro' foresight of the storm.

I have been in pain, sir, for your situation, in other respects. Your sensibility as a man, your sense of honor as a gentlemen, and the dignity of your office, must all have been extremely wounded, by the torrent of abuse, swelled by a thousand tributary rivulets from every part of the union, which has poured from the capital, on a large and meritorious body of the nation. Has it not, sir, filled you with anguish, and indignation, to hear our fellow-citizens calumniated from a press under your very eye; a press set up by British influence, managed by a British subject, of too profligate and contemptible a character, even to be named by a true American; and supplied with the materials of calumny on their fellow-citizens, by men support-

ed in the legislature of the union, to maintain the honor of the nation? Have you not seen, sir, with astonishment, as able and virtuous men as any in the nation, denounced from the chair of the house of representatives, in a manner most audacious and indecorous? You must already, sir, be sick at the mention of these things; and I will not revive your anguish, by going through a long detail of our national errors. But, one thing more, I cannot forbear to mention, however painful and distressing it may be to your feelings—

I lament, sir, that you have thought yourself obliged to countenance, in any degree, the military ardour so suddenly and unaccountably kindled, in the nation. That the French Republic, our ally, to which, notwithstanding, I profess myself firmly attached, hath done us wrongs, exceeding wrongs, I acknowledge with vexation. But, sir, can you, in your conscience, believe, that these wrongs can be redressed by a declaration of war, on our part? Can you believe, that invectives from the national legislature, and from almost every part of the republic, are calculated to reconcile our allies, or to force them to negociation? Does it not pain you, sir, to see the precipitancy with which we are grasping arms, to court a distant war to erect its standard on our shores, and to break our first design of maintaining peace and amity with a republic, erected on the basis of a just equality, and on

whose friendship we had strongly relied, for support against the hostile, and all-devouring ambition of European monarchies?

Can you, believe, sir, for only a single moment, that an indignity offered to our envoys, can be a sufficient reason for involving the nation in the complicated calamities of war; or that those most worthy men, who have acted so manly, so prudent, and so dignified a part, in circumstances the most delicate and embarrassed, would have the most distant desire that their countrymen should avenge the indignities they have suffered, at so high a price? No, sir, you cannot believe it, for a single moment.

I will conclude this first address, by assuring you of the great pleasure I have enjoyed, from reading your instructions to those gentlemen, on deputing them to the French Republic. Most heartily could I wish that your official character were vindicated to all your countrymen, in all other respects, as much to your own honor, and their satisfaction. And, that you may be able to do this, at a future day, is the unfeigned wish of one who truly respects you for your personal accomplishments. and honors you more, for the dignity of your office.

A Republican.

May 30, 1798—*Immortality to the Envoys, and the virtuous minority in Congress!*

A Fair Statement—No. XII.

APPENDIX—PART II.

To John Adams, Chief Servant of the United States of America.

SIR,

In my former address, I paid you a tribute of honor, to which I thought you justly entitled; and I shall always rejoice in every opportunity of applauding you, when it can be done, with fidelity and truth; and I would fain persuade myself, that the dignity of your sentiments would reject with indignation, every offering made to you, without the "unleavened bread of sincerity."

I am sincerely pleased, that another opportunity of commending you, presents itself to me, this very moment. In your reply to the address from the inhabitants of the town of Providence, in the state of Rhode-Island, near the close of it, you say,* "I agree entirely with you, in acquitting, in general, those of our citizens who have too much attached themselves to European politics, of any treacherous defection, from the cause of their country." How much, sir, do I feel obliged to you, for myself, and thousands of my worthy fellow-citizens, for a sentiment so liberal, and generous? Most certainly, yourself and the inhabitants of the little town of Providence, in the little state

* City Gazette for May 15, 1798.

of Rhode-Island, "who have been your friends and neighbors, from your youth," have been most gracious in acquitting us of "a treacherous defection from the cause of our country."

By what motives, I beseech you, sir, could we be induced to entertain any treacherous designs against our country? Leaving, without any farther notice, the people of Rhode-Island, disdaining to bring to your remembrance, the conduct of this patriotic state, at the establishment of our present constitution, I speak to you alone.

By what fatality, sir, hath it happened, that your own hand hath insidiously robbed you of the glory of one little sentence? That you have betrayed all your partialities, and disclosed inconsistencies in your sentiments—partialities and inconsistencies perfectly in hostility against that self-poized dignity which your office peremptorily demands, I have seen with unfeigned regret. And, I shall now, to do yourself and the nation justice, analyze that extraordinary answer, and comment upon it, "with all the malice of a friend."

You say, second paragraph of the answer—"I will not distinguish between the views of the governments and those of the nations; if, in France they are different, the nation, whose right it is, will soon show that they are so: if, in America, they are the same, this fact will be shewn by the nation in a short time, in a strong light."

By this unfortunate sentence, sir, you have lighted up a torch, which, to every sound and healthful eye, hath disclosed the very secrets of your heart. You have uncovered the sore made in your flesh, by a sentiment uttered to a former ambassador in France, that could not certainly have affected any man, whose sensibility was not awakened by the pride of office. Whether the nation of France is in opposition to its government, could never be questioned by any man who did not see the affairs of that people through an inverted optic. Is it possible, sir, you can suppose, in any hour of calm consideration, that, when the nation is covered with the glory, and enriched with the spoils of its conquests, the government should be more obnoxious to the people, than when its stability was threatened by surrounding nations, and still more endangered by the intrigues of the friends of the old establishment? Let me ask you, sir, how the republic hath supported its armies, and extended its territory, and compelled so many of its enemies into terms of peace, in every instance to its own advantage? Will you condescend to inform us, when it will be made apparent that the nation and government are opposite powers; and when the glorious day will arrive, when the departed Louis will revive from the dead, and resume the dominion and dignities which, by his own haughtiness and obstinacy, the almost inse-

perable concomitants of power, were wrested from his reluctant hands?

With whatever premeditation you constructed this unfortunate sentence, you have most obviously insinuated against the government of France, the very sentiment which, in fact I have just alluded to, hath so deeply wounded your own sensibility; and perhaps, more than any other cause, hath pushed forward the nation, to the steep precipice, on which it now stands. How far you may hereafter have reason to boast of the present ardor of the people, to support the measures that you yourself have principally originated, time, which not seldom developes events extremely different from our foresight, will enable you to judge. For my own part, I behold it with deep regret; and judge it far from improbability, that you may see cause to wish, for your own honor, and the good of the nation, that you had been less successful in gaining it to your side. It so seldom happens that violent measures, suddenly adopted, will stand the test of a calm review, that I am truly surprized at the confidence you seem to place in so fluctuating a thing as popular opinion.

With sincere wishes for your own happiness, and with stronger for that of the nation, I am, sir, respectfully, your fellow-citizen.

A Republican.

June 1, 1798.

A Fair Statement.—No. XII.

APPENDIX—PART III.

To John Adams, Chief Servant of the United States of America.

"Audi et alteram partem."
Keep the other ear open.

SIR,

I am so unaccustomed to speak to great men, that I am strongly sensible of the disadvantages under which my addresses must appear, particularly to yourself. But, integrity shall supply the defects of politure; and, as your fellow-citizen, and contributing my just part to the treasure of the nation, from which you are recompensed for your services, I demand of you a patient and impartial hearing.

I would not obscure one ray of that lustre which should ever beam from the dignified station where you stand; nor would I blight one leaf of that laurel, which now vegetates on your brow, by the invigorating air of popular applause. Soon, too soon for your feelings, it will wither of itself; and the refreshing gale which now wafts you so pleasantly along, will soon languish into a dead, dead calm, that will afford you sufficient leisure, soberly to review the impetuous measures which are distracting, through the long line of the union, our now ill-fated country.

In my last address, I took the liberty of making a short comment on a passage in your extraordina-

ry answer to the people of Providence; and bound myself, by a voluntary promise, to analyze such other parts of it as should appear to me most favorable to the end for which I approach you. I shall discuss your sentiments with perfect freedom; always, however, with all that respect, if possible, which your office demands; but the tribute is to the *office itself*, and not to you. You say, in paragraph third of your reply"---The ill success of those proofs which the United States have given to preserve all (*an*, I suppose) impartial neutrality, and of their repeated negociations for a redress of wrongs, has demonstrated, that other means must be resorted to, in order to obtain it." Is it possible, sir, you could have weighed the contents of this sentence before you wrote it down? Have you maturely investigated the means by which we can compel France to redress our wrongs, provided she should not be disposed to do it of her own accord? Have you contemplated the equipment of a navy, sufficient to pursue them on the high seas, and, by captures in every channel of their commerce, to repay ourselves for our plundered property? Or, is it your design, when the martial ardour of the nation shall be kindled to the highest, to transport across the Atlantic, an army of our young men and boys, formidable enough to plant, on the shores of France, the American standard; and, within her own territory, to fight her into measures of justice?

Or, perhaps, as still more plausible, you have reckoned on foreign aid. And was it for this purpose, that you dispatched an ambassador to Prussia, where we have just as much occasion for one to reside, as in Lapland, or Otaheite? Or, what may be with you the most favorite scheme of all, you have perhaps relied on the aid of Britain. We all know the generosity and philanthropic views of the British government. We know that it enlisted, as a volunteer, against France, on the most pure and disinterested principles, merely to maintain the cause of morality and religion, against a nation of infidels, and a little to prop up the interests of declining monarchy.

But, as charity begins at home, and Britain seems, at present, to have as much business of her own upon hand, as she can well manage, we can look for no assistance now. However, should she be able to settle her accounts handsomely with France, what shall then remain of her wealth and force, we may hope she will promptly transfer to our use, out of pure love to our democratic constitution.

To be serious, sir, when you wrote that strange sentence, had you distinctly in your eye, one single measure that you could rely upon, for compelling France to redress our wrongs? If you know of any such means, it is high time they should not only be defined with precision, but be coming forward with energy, into operation.

Had you said, should France refuse to negociate with us an amicable accommodation, and, to the additional wrongs already done us, should add the violence of invading our country, we must resolutely resort to the painful, but justifiable means of defending it to the last extremity, every man would have clearly understood you; and pardon me for saying, that, it appears to me, you would better have understood yourself—and I will add, that there are few men in the union, who would not heartily have joined you. But, when you hint, in such vague and general terms, at forcible means to redress our wrongs, you only perplex and embarrass us with endless conjecture, and alarm us with apprehensions, without pointing at the means of quieting them.

Let me beseech you, sir, for your own honor, and more for the honor of the nation, as well as out of tenderness to the fearful part of your fellow-citizens, that, when you come forward with more answers to more patriotic addresses, you would study a little more perspicuity and accuracy in your composition, that you may be the better understood. For my own part, I think I generally understand you a little *too clearly*, for the entire repose of my own mind; and this, because I love my country, and am, from invariable sentiment,

A Democrat.

6th June, 1798—*Health and peace to all good Democrats!*

A Fair Statement—No. XIII.

"*When ye shall hear of wars, and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for, they* must *be.*"

The land of Canaan was exceedingly populous, and governed by thirty-one kings, who, perhaps, were rather the presidents, or chief counsellors of the people they ruled, than masters. Yet, the Israelites were expressly commanded to destroy them utterly; and this, under the most severe anathemas against themselves, if they failed to execute the divine decree. Humanity cannot but shudder at this event; but the statutes of God are right, and we are bound to reverence them, how far soever above our comprehension.

Voltaire and Shaftsbury, writers equally shallow and presumptuous, have united their ridicule against Moses and Joshua, for this affair; but their characters are as invulnerable by the shafts thrown by such paralytic hands, as the whole of their conduct, in their respective offices, was strongly marked with great fidelity, and manifested that they did not act on the common rules of human prudence; but, were directed by the express commands of God. This consideration might, of itself, be sufficient to satisfy all our difficulties, and stifle every suggestion that might arise in our

minds, against the equity, and benevolence of the procedure against the Egyptians and Canaanites. But I will here advance the argument on which I have always most relied, and which I think is decisive, on the case. The family of Abraham had been selected from the mass of idolatry, to be the depositaries, and guardians, of the primitive truths of religion, in which the happiness of all mankind was deeply interested; but which, in successive generations, from Noah, had been almost totally extinguished. During the continuance of this people in Egypt, they had nearly lost the doctrines communicated to the pattern* of the faithful, in the superstitions and idolatries of the country.

In pursuance of his most benevolent design, of transmitting to future generations, by this people, the salutary truths respecting the redemption of the world, God, who perfectly comprehends, and always consults, the measures best adapted to the happiness of his creation, saw it to be a proper time to remove the Israelites to a situation, which was not only their allotted inheritance, but the best adapted to keep them from the danger of solicitations to idolatry.†

* In reference to his extraordinary faith, in the affair of Isaac.

† I recommend to such of my readers, who feel any interest in this important subject, to read the *Jews' letters to Voltaire*---a performance of great and singular merit.

Idolatry, in every instance, is the crime of high treason against the "king of kings;" and on this account alone, the Canaanites had forfeited their right to life, and all its advantages; and God, who alone was to judge of the punishment proper for their crimes, had the right of appointing, as the ministers of his justice, the Israelites, or any other nation that he should choose.

Had the Canaanites voluntarily removed, and given peaceable possession to the Israelites, of the land originally laid out for them, there can be no doubt that they would have gone off, with all their possessions, without molestation. But, they were determined to maintain by force, the land they had occupied by usurpation, and the consequence was, that they suffered extermination.

There is one most pleasing fact in this history, which is greatly to the honor of Joshua, and the other princes of the people. The Hivites, who inhabited four considerable cities in the land, hearing that victory and destruction every where attended the Israelites, in order to save themselves, fell upon a most ingenious stratagem, which, however, succeeded only by the dint of falsehood on their part. Two or three days after, when the people found they had been deluded into a league, contrary to the express command of God, they were immediately for destroying the Hivites. "But all the princes said to all the congregation, we have

sworn unto them by the Lord God of Israel; now, therefore, we may not touch them." They accordingly spared them; but, for their deception, condemned them to be menials, through their succeeding generations.* This fact most clearly shews, that the Israelites were by no means, that ferocious and sanguinary people, which many idle writers have attempted to make them out.

Here, then, is another great revolution, in its connexion with others that have followed, of great and universal import to mankind, effected with great concomitant calamities; but, calamities that bear no proportion to the moral good that hath ultimately resulted from them. And, if I can execute my aim, the same thing will be made apparent, in those which remain to be mentioned.

A CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

8th June, 1798.

[No. XIV, BY SOME ACCIDENT, WAS LOST—*EDITOR.*]

A Fair Statement—No. XV.

"*When ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars be ye not troubled: for they must be*" CHRIST.

THE next great revolution of extensive import to society, was the subversion of the Roman empire. This unwieldy fabric had been reared on

* See Joshua, Chapter 9, where the whole affair is related in the most agreeable and entertaining manner.

the ruins of many of the finest countries, and most brave and independent nations of the world. From a false and pernicious patriotism, at first, and afterwards from the passion for riches, the Romans deemed themselves entitled to extend their conquests and domination, wherever their arms were capable of securing these objects. Despising the rest of mankind, and considering themselves as formed to be the masters of the world, they set no limits to their ambition; but resolutely engaged in every measure, whether of violence, or fraud, that promised to gratify it.

Persevering on these principles, they had, at length subjugated to their tyranny, and embraced within their territory, a large proportion of the inhabited globe; till satiated with the glory of conquest, and enriched with the spoils of the conquered, they thought the stability of their empire secure; and that nothing remained, but to enjoy in luxury, what they had gained by rapine.

From the period of the commonwealth, the principles of decay and dissolution, inherent in its construction, began to operate with power; their wisest maxims of policy fell into disuse; their martial courage and hardihood sunk into effeminacy; while maxims and measures of injustice pervaded every department of office, from the capital to the remotest province of the empire, and the hour of their irrecoverable ruin hastened, with a rapidity

far greater than that with which they had advanced to the summit of their strength and glory.

Having triumphed over the liberties and happiness of the rest of mankind, they were, in their turn, to experience a similar, nay, a more terrible fate. From various parts of Germany, where their arms had not reached; from the Northern parts of Europe, and Northwestern tracts of Asia, a multitude of people of different tribes and languages, brave, accustomed to hardships, and intent upon plunder, poured, in successive torrents, upon the empire with such irresistible impetuosity, that within two centuries after their first inroads, that immense power, the work of so many ages, was overthrown with irretrievable ruin. So terrible was the desolation which accompained these republican invaders, the avengers of the cruelties and tyranny of the Romans, that the finest parts of Europe were changed into dreary desarts, without cities, without villages, without tillage, and almost without inhabitants. "If a man, says Robertson,* were called to fix upon the period, in the history of the world, during which the condition of the human race was most calamitous and afflicted, he would without hesitation name that which elapsed from the death of Theodosius the Great (A. D. 395) to the establishment of the Lombards in Italy," (A. D. 571).

* Charles V.

This catastrophe of the Roman empire may, in part, be considered, as a just retribution, for the enormities perpetrated by that ferocious people, on so many distant, unoffending nations; who, though destitute of the arts which civilize and improve society, were happy in their native independence, and that firmness of constitution, and temper, which reconciled them, from infancy, to every hardship.

Besides, which is a stronger consideration, the interests of society required, that a domination extended on so broad a basis, and which depressed humanity to the most abject and pitiable condition, should not only be reduced within narrower limits, but erased to its very foundation. It would, apparently, have been impossible for the most profound and refined policy to have reduced into one common and uniform mass, capable of enjoying, to any tolerable degree, the advantages of the social compact, so many heterogeneous materials, as the people who composed the Roman empire, after it had reached its utmost limits. The longer they had subsisted in one community, the more wretched, in all probability, they must have become; till the noblest powers of humanity had sunk into a state of rudeness, and imbecility, from which ages of cultivation might have been requisite to recover them.

It is true, the immediate consequences of this revolution on the state of Europe were deplorable in the extreme; and it was not till late in the eleventh century, that it began to exhibit a state of society, indicative of the advantages resulting from breaking an immense empire of despotism into a variety of states and kingdoms, more favorable to the intellect, the moral principle, and the manners of mankind

The last revolution to be now mentioned, as producive of considerable advantages to society, is the Reformation. The papal usurpation had taken its rise from so small a beginning, as the annexation of precedency, in the assemblies of the clergy, to the bishop of Rome, as capital of the empire, and the most distinguished city in which Christianity had obtained a footing. In A. D. 606, he became universal Bishop of the church, and in 756, a civil prince; from which time, his claims both in ecclesiastical and civil affairs were gradually increased, and his dignities and powers augmented, till he had reared and established a domination, to which there has been nothing similar in the history of the world; and than which there never was a completer triumph over the ignorance and credulity of mankind, or a more violent and impious intrusion on the prerogative of Christ, as sole legislator, judge, and head of the church: alike hostile to the rights of the church, as Christians, and as men,

to the spirit of Christianity, and the repose of civil society. With an ambition and avarice equally insatiable, it persevered in a systematic plan of reducing under its subjection, all the kingdoms of the world to which its power was capable of reaching. It assumed, with the pretensions to infallibility, the authority of controling the decisions of councils, the edicts of kings, the dictates of conscience, and the sense of Scripture. Maintaining the splendor and luxury of royalty, it imposed on the laity, watchings, and fastings, and a variety of other penances not authorized by the Gospel, and serving only to subject the hoodwinked commonalty the more completely to its degrading domination.

With audacity against heaven, and hostility against virtue and human happiness, it authorized, by a formal indulgance, and at a fixed price, the commission of every crime to which depravity could stimulate the human heart. In short, this power, which was limited only by impossibilities, had not only a part in most of the wars which ravaged Enrope, for several centuries, but was itself the moving and directing principle which originated and continued them.

The first considerable check to these anti-christian usurpations, was by the intrepid Luther, who did more towards the liberation of the human mind from the fetters of a cruel tyranny, than could have been expected from any single man. Having

to oppose the united obstacles of ignorance, credulity, and superstition, of ecclesiastical and civil power, it is much more wonderful that he effected what he did, than that he did not effect more. The light he struck out had to struggle thro' opposing clouds of obscurity, before it could communicate its healthful influence to the world; but, though its progress hath been slow, it has, at length, spread into a wide and cheering day.

As might have been expected, so it turned out that, with all the advantages of the Reformation, there were also consequent inconveniences. The civil wars which were quickly kindled in Germany; the extravagant and disgraceful licentiousness into which many of the protestants ran, on finding themselves released from their chains; and the barbarous and desolating persecutions which were raised against them, and carried on, for a long succession of years, almost in every part of Europe, were evils that followed the reformation; but which chiefly arose from the remaining spirit, and opposition, of that tyranny through which it had broken. Yet, had they been much greater than they were, it would be easy to shew, that they would be far overbalanced, by the advantages to literature and science, to Christian knowledge and morality, and to religious and civil liberty, which have ultimately resulted from that revolution.

In the facts which have been recited, it would have been useless to have attempted a minute detail of their respective benefits and inconveniences to society. The great events of the world have generally been effected by such a combination of causes and operations, and productive of such a variety of effects, that the most laborious investigation can mark, with precision, only a few of the more obvious and prominent; and it is only by its most general and permanent consequences, that any particular event can be determined, as mainly good, or evil.

The result of the preceding recital is—

1. That there is a certain uniformity in the procedure of human affairs, which indicates certain principles common to all mankind, as well as the operation of laws instituted by a supreme intelligence, by which all events are so managed, as ultimately to effect the benefit of the system in which they take place. By the assurance of this last truth we become easily reconciled to many things in the disposition of the world, which we cannot well understand; and are enabled, amidst the greatest tumults and commotions of society, to form a general judgment of their tendency and termination. This is a light in the midst of darkness, which, if it does not distinctly show us the surrounding objects, serves to quiet our fears, and guide us in the path we wish to pursue.

2. From the preceding recital, it results also, that the great object of the divine dispensations, to mankind, hath been, in every age of the world, the amelioration of society. The process towards this end, it is granted, hath been apparently slow; the bulk of men hath been in every age destitute of the means best adapted to this purpose; and where these means have been in operation, many obstacles have occurred to prevent their producing their full effects. These circumstances, though difficulties beyond the power of human solution, do not, in the least, obviate the truth of the general observation. Though the best means of improving mankind have never been in universal, they have, notwithstanding, been always in partial operation: while a general darkness hath covered the face of the earth, some places have been sufficiently illumined for all the purposes of human happiness.

3. If the observations already made, be just, we are still to look for the progression of human affairs towards the highest state of improvement of which they are capable. It must be evident to the most superficial observation, that the most advanced state of cultivation to which any nation that we are acquainted with hath yet arrived, is far short of that which is indicated by the strength of human genius, and which seems necessary for perfecting that order already noticed. I am far

from agreeing with Mr. Hume, in the extensive sense which the words will admit of, that " there is an ultimate point of depression, as well as of exaltation, from which human affairs naturally return, in a contrary progress and beyond which they seldom pass either in their advancement or decline."* We have indeed, seen both individuals, and nations of mankind, apparently in the lowest state of depression to which they could be reduced; but, I know not that we have ever seen either the one or the other in possession of all the advantages requisite to raise it to the ultimate attainable point of elevation. To enter into a minute detail of the obstacles which have stood in the way towards this point, is not necessary to my present purpose; it is sufficient to enumerate the principal and more obvious of them: and this will be attempted in my succeeding number.

A Citizen of the World.

July 5, 1798.

* History of England.

THE SERVILITY

OF

PREJUDICE DISPLAYED.

NUMBER I.

Messieurs Freneau & Paine,

The jocose toast-maker in your Gazette of the 3d instant, who has done so much honor to his *Britannic Majesty*, and expressed so benevolent a wish for the prolongation of his inestimable life, has undesignedly become the *founder* of a series of political productions, as curious in themselves, as they are novel for *your* paper. By this time, I dare say, he is much surprized at the comprehensiveness of his genius, which could condense so great a quantity of heterogeneous matter, into the limits of one short sentence. Surely, the toast-maker is the most prolific genius that has ever appeared in public; and it is to him alone that we are indebted for the inestimable work of your now cor-

respondent, the *Vindicator*, who has no claim in the business, to any other merit, than that of expounding, and sifting, and acting as obstetrix, on the pregnant toast, to deliver it of the vast progeny it contains, enough to people a whole region, nay, a great part of the globe; for your Vindicator has found in it something applicable, not only to America, and England, but to every country where the arms of France have extended, and wherever they shall be extended, *ad infinitum*. This great philosopher has evidently taken up the principle of some of the old great philosophers, that "all things are contained in one,"—that is to say, that a handful of earth contains in it the whole system of the elements; and that a skilful alchymist, with a proper apparatus, may extract from it, tin, brass, copper, iron, silver, gold, and every thing else, good and bad. More than this, that, considering the docility, and ductility, and malleability, and expansibility of matter, you might extend the smallest particle of it, say a grain of sand or a mote of dust, to the outermost circle of the material system. In this, there is nothing at all more mysterious than in the celebrated position of Archimedes, "give me a place to stand upon, and I will lift the whole earth." This small toast is the very punctum, or fundamentum, or fulcrum, or whatever else you may please to call it, on which this admirable mathematician, and politi-

cian, and logician, *Vindicator*, has *moved* a great part of the inhabited earth. Should he proceed a little farther in the application of his irresistible powers, I am terribly alarmed for the consequence. We may next expect him to shake the new republic of Egypt; thence, I suppose he will follow the French arms through all Turkey; thence, to the East-Indies; and so on, in a regular progression, till he shall have shaken the whole earth, as a fig-tree with ripe fruit, and sent us all off to look for a place of more stability, in some unpeopled planet of the system.

All this may appear quite incredible to a great part of your readers; but this is merely owing to their ignorance of the vast powers of mechanism and chymistry, and their not being accustomed to read the productions of this sagacious and mighty analyser, who has now, for the first time, by picking up your Gazette, merely by accident, obliged us with the efforts of his all-descriptive genius.

First, I a little wonder that he has pitched on *your* paper as the medium of conveying his profound lucubrations to the public: not being a subscriber, as he is careful to inform us, he was under no obligation to confer on your paper and the customary readers of it, the inestimable favor of this elaborate work. There were other papers more congenial with his opinions, and of much

more respectability in the opinion of writers of his rank and character, and much more in need of matter, who would no doubt have considered his performance as *quite an acquisition*, and whose subscribers would have thought themselves much more obliged to him, than the majority of your's will be apt to do.

The true explanation of the business is this: He well knew, though no subscriber, that your paper is generally as correct, as well furnished with entertaining and useful matter, and as extensively circulated, as any other in the union: and judging that his performance would be as highly estimated by a majority of the people through the states, as by himself, he rightly preferred your gazette, as better adapted to his benevolent views, than any other.

His other views in giving *you* the preference, shall be noticed hereafter; and will equally serve to unfold the true spirit and principles by which he is governed.

I hope you will pardon me the liberty I have taken, in attempting to vindicate your excellent paper, against his pitiful insinuations. No greater proof can ever be desired, by men of candor, of the perfect impartiality of your press, than the preference he has given to it, to circulate his undigested and most prejudiced performance. It is not unusual, that a circumstance apparently very

trifling in itself, becomes a clue to lead through all the intricacies of character and system. From the two sentences I shall next mention, I could certainly discover the whole scope of this writer, as well as if he were to write a folio for the purpose.

COLUMBIANUS.

May 16, 1799.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. II.

THE Vindicator says, No. II. "And is it "possible, that when these are the views, and "these the exertions of Great-Britain, in vindica- "tion of religion, of morals, and of social order, "that persons should be found, who would pub- "lish the sentiment which appeared in this paper "at your instance and request?" The thread-bare and ridiculous sentiment about the exertions of Great-Britain in vindication of religion, morals, &c. in her present contest with France. I shall duly honor at a proper time. My observations at present, relate merely to yourselves. With what sense of honor or decorum, I would ask any man upon earth of the least sensibility, could a writer, who, in the very first sentence of his publication, declares himself no subscriber to your paper, ask you to print a performance written with a view to depreciate your character as printers, and to reflect

upon the whole of your readers who have not adopted the system of politics to which he is so servilely attached? Truly, a man who would thus undertake to dictate to you, in your office of conductors of a press, what you are to publish, and what not, must not only be very devoid of that delicacy which is generally the attendant of a mind improved by true science, but must also be possessed of a most untoward opinion of his own consequence.

Besides, the confinement under which a press must lie, agreeable to the suggestion of this very consequential writer, would, in a great measure, deprive us of its principal advantages, the opportunity of knowing all that can be offered on the different sides of every public question, and contested subject. By free discussion, the minds of individuals become enlightened by the truth, and the public opinion, on subjects of public importance, has the best chance of being rightly determined. Whereas, by limiting the press to publications of a particular description, and subjecting it to the controul of a few men, who would set themselves up for dictators on subjects of public disquisition, the most depressing tyranny would become established, and the most important lights of science obstructed and stifled.

The other sentence on this subject, which offers itself for a remark or two, is this: "I dwell on

this topic, (we shall see what it is hereafter) merely to shew to the subscribers of this paper, who are not in the habit of having before them, newspaper communications of this nature," &c. &c. It is very true, that the subscribers to your paper are not in the habit of having before them communications of this sort; and I dare say, there are many of them who do not in the least regret, that this is the case; nay, had it been so, that some other press had been honored as the medium of this communication, I am persuaded they would not have missed a single sentence of information of real importance to our present circumstances.

But, though your press has seldom communicated to the public, the political opinions of *Vindicator*, or of other writers who have taken the same ground with him, the fault, if a fault it be, has certainly not been on your side. It is greatly to your honor that you have, so far as I have seen, rigidly adhered to the motto of your paper, and in this line, I hope you will steadily persevere: the consequence of which will certainly be, that, while others, who have acted on different principles, must inevitably sink, as the tide of popular opinion turns, you will secure the approbation and support of the candid, and ingenuous of all parties.

One principal reason of the high offence which *Vindicator* has taken at the toast, is, that he consi-

ders it as an insult to his Britannic majesty.* For my own part, I consider it much rather as a jest, at the same time it evidently shews the author's sense of the part which his Britannic majesty has taken in the war against the French republic. That it should be so unpardonable an offence against his majesty's knight, for an American to pass a good humoured jest upon him, seems a little unreasonable; particularly as his majesty is very well accustomed to bear them from his own subjects, who, one would suppose, are much less entitled to the right of using such a freedom with him, than a foreigner, who stands in no other relation to him than that of a mere man. The following, I think, couches in it a much severer sentiment than the toast itself, and is said to be from a member of his own parliament—*Hawkesbury*

> "From G------, my strain begins, whose actions bold
> Shall fill each ear, wherever they are told:
> From G-- ---, compassion's meek and gentle heir,
> Whose Sheep and Subjects are his equal care."†

It is somewhat extraordinary, and argues a little partiality, that the choler of Vindicator should be so exceedingly raised against the toast, for jocosely ascribing to his Britannic majesty, the honor of founding the American republic, when he

* No. II. 2d paragraph.

† The Streatham Album, or ministerial amusements, ascribed to Mr. Sheridan.

himself has done it very seriously, and pursued an elaborate train of argument to prove it. "That his Britannic majesty, as sovereign and chief magistrate of the kingdom of Great Britain, was in one sense, founder of the American republic, is true." Yes, certainly it is true, in the same sense that the tyrants of Athens founded the polished colony of Marseilles; that Philip II. founded the United Provinces; and Albert I. founded the republic of Switzerland. Who can doubt of the high honor to which these disinterested sovereigns were respectively entitled, for compelling so many of their subjects to relinquish their jurisdictions, and set up independent governments of their own? From this hopeful beginning of his majesty, who has already done more for republicanism, than all the other monarchs of Europe put together, we may reasonably expect, that in the course of a very few years, he will more than double the honor he has already acquired. For my own part, judging of the future by the past, and reasoning from existing principles and facts, I think it not at all improbable, considering his age, that he may yet live very near long enough, to be the founder of two other republics a little nigher him: I mean, one in Ireland, and the other in Great-Britain itself. He may then retire from the world in peace, leaving behind him "monuments more permanent than brass."

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice, Displayed—No. III.

The arguments by which *Vindicator* has proved his Britannic majesty to be the founder of the American republic, are precisely such as might be expected for so extraordinary a position, of which the following are the most prominent and cogent in the series:—"The independence of America was foreseen and predicted by many persons in Great-Britain, as soon as there appeared to exist in the cabinet of that country, a desire and wish to make the colonies contribute by taxation to her revenues. The proposition therefore, as soon as it was made known, occasioned, as was expected, serious cause of alarm to the well wishers of both countries. While the colonists were outrageous at the folly of the proposition, to tax them without their consent, or without having a voice in the British legislature, there were not wanting characters in that august assembly, to advocate the rights of the colonies. Never were the different parts of any subject discussed with more warmth, vehemence, ability and feeling. And thus the government, betwixt the supposed necessity of enforcing plans which were to augment its exchequer on the one side, and the dread picture of alarm pourtrayed on the other, preferred the former, and accordingly Great-Britain found her-

self engaged in a war with her colonies." The stress of this part of the argument, seems to lie entirely here—that after the government had formally declared war against America, Great-Britain, to her utter astonishment, found herself engaged in a war with us.

"Unfortunately its annals, (the history of mankind) furnish too many examples of this deplorable disposition in governments to hearken to measures," (their own measures) "not founded on the welfare of the people." But even in countries which have either boasted of, or been blessed with some degree of freedom, examples of this disposition in governments have not been wanting. It seldom, however, proceeded from a determination to sacrifice the public weal, or make it subservient to private or ambitious views;* but most generally from that error of judgment, and mistaken policy, which as often perhaps creeps into the cabinet of states, as it attaches itself to private life and conduct.†

"In order to do this," (to be prepared against invasion) "she, (Great-Britain) has been con-

* The whole series of history proves the very reverse of this observation.

† This is a most candid interpretation of the most oppressive measures, that may be adopted by public rulers. The most perfect candor will make us cautious never to ascribe them to any other cause than an innocent error of judgment, and a little mistaken policy.

strained, at particular times, to keep up and maintain great and expensive armaments. These armaments laid the foundation of heavy taxes: and thus originated in part, the desire to make the colonies contribute to the security of the mother country."

"American taxation was, in fact, a creature of his, (the Earl of Bute's) own creation. Having the tutelage and guardianship of a young monarch, he found, it seems, no difficulty in imparting to the cabinet and council, principles which he designed for his pupil. And it was in the midst of a weakness,* as unaccountable as it was mischievous, and against the clamors of the English nation, that the court of Great-Britain received, (from itself) and adopted a policy, which cool reflection would have condemned,† and which at length plunged her into that war with her colo-

* Yes, but it was the weakness of injustice, the want of moral principle—"That whatever spurious pretences were offered, they were all *hollow*, and that to get a larger field on which to fatten a herd of worthless parasites, was all that was intended" *Dr. Fothergill's letter to Dr. Franklin. Ramsay's American Revolution, Vol. I.*

Lord Mansfield declared—"That the question of original right and wrong were no longer to be considered; and that the justice of the cause must give way to their present situation."—*Idem.* This was the decision of the oracle of English law.

† This apology may be equally used in behalf of every infraction of moral principles. Certainly, Vindicator was not aware of the consequences of his remark.

nies, which she shortly after experienced."—No. I. from paragraph 5, ad finem.

Therefore his Britannic majesty was founder of the American republic. *Quod erat demonstrandum. Vive le Roi de l'Angleterre!*

Having thus established a truth, in which Vindicator seems to have been much interested, and in which he has labored *cum multo sudore*, I shall now proceed to notice some other things in his admirable vindication, of equal importance with the preceding, and supported by reasoning equally conclusive and convincing. By the way, I observe that he has made much use of a mode of logic which a Grecian would call the *tupos centilogias:* that is, a way of argumentation by which you confute yourself, or prove the very contrary of what you intend to prove. In this, there is one great advantage, when dexterously managed, that you are almost sure of the truth, either in the proposition, or the conclusion of the arguments to maintain it.

Speaking of French influence, he says, "and which, were your sentiments to prevail, would shortly lay the foundation of a republic of French modelling and construction in the continent of America."

Again, "these opinions, (the supposed opinions of the toast) if generally adopted, would tend to the subversion of that good understanding

which at present so happily subsists between Great-Britain and this country. This is the very desideratum in the policy of a certain party in this country, wickedly intent on the preservation of any system of politics which may disarm the government of its security and energy."

Again, "nay more; it, (the present constitution) has enabled this people, amidst traitors and incendiaries, and the designs of a vile French faction," &c. &c. No. II.

My first remarks on the sentiments contained in these passages, is, that they are perfectly worthy of Porcupine himself; and their author, judging from them, one of the fittest men in the union, for acting as coadjutor with him in the base business of calumniating a large proportion of the citizens of these states, merely for the purpose of carrying on the views of a pernicious and profligate policy: for assuredly, that is such, which requires the aid of falsehood and injustice to support it. Men whose views are upright, and deserving of success, can never be under the necessity of sacrificing the rights and happiness of others, to gain their point. No circumstances of individuals, or even the largest community, can ever justify the violation of the eternal laws and principles of moral obligation. For, if we could suppose a single case, in which, on Lord Mansfield's principles, the questions of right and wrong ought not to be consi-

dered, and in which justice ought to give way to circumstances, we may suppose a second, and a third, and a thousand; till at last there will be no standard of moral conduct left, but every man be at liberty to act just as he may please, and the divine constitution be subverted by the dictates of human depravity. This is a serious subject, and shall be seriously discussed.

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. IV.

"The tendency of the soul towards the malicious, springs from "self-love, or a pleasure to find mankind more wicked, base, or un-"fortunate, than ourselves." ART OF POLITICAL LYING.

EVER since the commencement of our unfortunate contest with the French republic, every practicable expedient has been strenuously applied, to extinguish every spark of attachment to the government, the constitution, and the nation: and had truth, honor, and justice been alone employed for the purpose, there had been less ground of exception against the measure. At the same time, to foment hatred against any nation upon earth, as an integral part of the human race, and civil society, is, in my opinion, as inconsistent with the laws of benevolence, humanity, and justice, as for one individual to cherish the same passion towards another.

Supposing the *administration* of the French government to be entirely as bad, as we, and the British government, and all other governments of Europe, which have combined against it, have represented it; there can be no sufficient reason for continually heaping upon the *nation*, with all the industry of enmity, the most bitter and provoking reproaches—reproaches which certainly do them no harm; but serve to widen the breach which has already been made, and to render a reconciliation, and friendly intercourse, more difficult and improbable. They are also a proof of great weakness, while they never redress wrongs.

That the government has departed from the principles of the constitution, there can be no doubt; but what is that to us, any more than as some particular acts of it have violated the treaty we had made with them, during the old government, and infringed our rights, as a neutral nation, in their war with the governments that aimed to overthrow the republic, and replace, in its stead, the subverted monarchy? The British government has, in innumerable instances, departed from the principles of the constitution, and been guilty of acts of excessive cruelty and tyranny, over its own subjects; and also violated our rights, as a neutral nation, and the treaty lately made with it, though, in general, much more to their advantage, than to ours. But, as the acts of go-

vernments are very often entirely against the sense of a large proportion of the nations they govern, it is great injustice to charge to the account of a nation, the follies and excesses of the government it is under. For my own part, though I entertain a great dislike to the British government, I respect the nation, as I do others; and can always find a pleasure in commending any thing that is praise-worthy in it, as readily as in any other. But, I confess that I feel no such filial veneration for it, as the mother country, as Vindicator seems to feel, as often as he speaks of it. I have long since outgrown such baby affection; and think, and speak, of this dear mother, as though I stood in no tenderer relation to her, than to any other mother country in the world.

But, to return. It has been our policy to say every thing against the French nation that could be said, and much more than could be justified, on any principle of honor, or decency; in order, as far as possible, to destroy that attachment we had conceived for it, both on account of the services it had rendered us in gaining our own independence, and the republican principles it had adopted, on changing its form of government. Such an attachment was both natural and commendable; it was equally founded on gratitude and interest; on gratitude for services received; and on interest, as it seemed to afford a security

to our new government, against the enmity which might naturally be expected from the monarchies of Europe, and from that of Britain, in particular. It was an affection of generosity and dignity; and it was sincere and strong, in proportion to the strength and purity of our patriotism; to our attachment to the principles of the revolution, and the constitution we adopted for our own government: and, when it was at the highest, I am perfectly persuaded, with the best of wishes for the prosperity of the French republic, it combined as zealous a regard to the independence, and various interests of our own country, and a complete and perpetual exemption from all foreign influence and jurisdiction, as ever actuated a nation. This, however, was the case with those only who were hearty friends to the revolution, and from principle, preferred the republican form of government to any other. There were very many among us, and there still are, who earnestly wished the re-establishment of the old one: or, at least, such a connexion with the British government, as might, in some measure, subject us to its influence and controul: and yet these very persons, *usque ad hominem*, since the moment of our breach with France, have most loudly vociferated the excellence of our constitution, the prosperity of our country, the extreme danger and mischiefs of foreign influence, and the necessity and justice of

the most exceptionable and unconstitutional measures that have taken place in the course of our government. To this I will add, that, should effective measures be adopted for a reconciliation with France, and a renewal of friendly intercourse, many of them will be the first and most vehement to declaim against them.

That this is highly probable, may be fairly concluded from what has happened, since the late nomination of envoys to the republic. Some pretended to doubt the truth of it, and declared it was impossible; but, should it really be true, that the President would instantly, and deservedly, lose all his old friends; that is, every man whose friendship was worth having. The result of this, is too well known.

With a view to reconcile the people of these states to two things—the British treaty, and a formal rupture with France, certain measures were adopted, against which great complaint and opposition was made, both in congress, and out of it. But, as these measures, with a majority, were too favorable to be relinquished, it was deemed expedient to effect them on any terms: and the determination to do this, made it necessary to come to another determination, which was, to represent the opposition, in every shape, as arising from a criminal and treacherous attachment to France; and this brings us fully into the business before us.

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice, Displayed—No. V.

From the time that the debates began on the measures to be pursued towards France, every effort has been made, that could be made, to fix the stigma of French influence, French faction, sedition, treachery and conspiracy against the government, on every man in the union, who wished to avoid, as long as possible, every measure that might have a tendency to involve us in a war with that nation, and preclude all hope of an amicable accommodation. Never was a point pressed with more assiduity and eagerness, nor aided by artifices less worthy of a civilized and enlightened nation; or more destructive of that sense of moral obligation, which all men, and especially citizens of the same community, owe to one another. It has been represented as an article of patriotism and virtue, nay, of religion itself, to combine with the charge of treason against the nation, the charges of the more egregious crimes of hostility to social and moral order; of designs to overthrow every principal of morality, and to loosen every restraint on human depravity. The men who have advocated measures of peace, and laboured, as they believed, to maintain the constitution inviolate, in every extremity, have been accused of approving of all the excesses of the French government and

nation, and even of conspiring with them against the very essence of Christianity. In short, there has no crime been committed against humanity, justice, or religion, either in France, or the various places where its arms and conquests have reached, to which these unoffending men have not been charged as accessories.

And what renders this conduct the more offensive and condemnable is, that the recited accusations have not been laid against obscure and uninfluential individuals only; but against men of the most conspicuous character, the most distinguished talents, and the most unquestionable patriotism. In both houses of congress, every member in the minority, in every degree of respectability and merit, has been defamed, not only as the enemy of our own government and nation, but of all regular governments, and of all mankind. Even the Vice-President of the States, Mr. Jefferson, a man confessedly among the first in the nation, for well-cultivated literature and philosophy, for a large fund of political information, and, in the opinion of every unprejudiced man, who is acquainted with his political conduct, both before and since the establishment of our independence, of the most fervent and invariable patriotism: *he* has not only been subjected to the common calumny, but been placed at the head of the *supposed conspirators* against their country.

With respect to this gentleman, in particular, one would necessarily conclude, considering the various services he has rendered his country, and his high rank in the national government, that nothing short of the most clear and indubitable proofs, ought to have involved *him* in the accusation of crimes of so atrocious a nature, as I have mentioned: "but unfortunately, his merit had "turned the eyes of many of his countrymen upon "him to fill a great office, and that merit must be "some way diminished."*

This brings me to observe, that it would be impossible for the most candid man in the world, who was not acquainted with the causes which have originated this abominable and cruel business of defamation, to entertain the smallest doubt that at least the greatest part of the preceding charges have been grounded on facts sufficiently ascertained for legal prosecution and conviction. If there be really such a faction, and conspiracy, in the bosom of our country, and the conspirators be known to government itself, why have not pro-

* Judge Pendleton of Virginia—See his statement in the City Gazette, June 19, 1799. As I shall have occasion to quote a sentence or two more from this important publication, I think it proper to mention, for sake of those who do not know his character, that he is universally esteemed in Virginia, as an able politician, an upright judge. and an excellent man in private life. And I earnestly wish his statement were known to every man in the union capable of judging of it.

per steps been taken to secure these egregious offenders, and convict them of the high crimes and misdemeanors they are charged with, that they may be made to suffer the just punishment of their iniquities? But so far is this from being the case, that notwithstanding the charges are still industriously and confidently repeated, till the public ear is almost deafened with hearing them, there has not yet been a single instance of treason, nor any thing like it, detected.

Last year, indeed, a worthy member of our own, informed the house of representatives, that he had in his hands a clue, by which, he pledged himself to the house, that he would detect a vile and dangerous conspiracy: but, though he may still be in possession of the clue, the conspiracy I believe, still remains in *statu quo*, and so will remain forever.

In order, however, a little to save his credit, and the credit of those who had associated with him, in this patriotic business, as well as to give some colour to the charges of treason, that engrossed the public attention, a memorial was brought forward, stated to have been presented to the French directory, by a Dr. Logan, a citizen of Pennsylvania, who had then lately returned from France. This gentleman, it was confidently given out, had been sent to France, as the agent of the "vile French faction" in America, to con-

cert measures with the directory, about carrying into effect the views of the said faction. The scrutiny into this affair was carried on with extreme vehemence, and it was represented, would terminate in a complete triumph over the faction: but, after it had cost the nation a pretty round sum of dollars, and consumed a great deal of important time, it came out that the memorial was neither presented nor written by Dr. Logan: that he had gone to France without even a letter of recommendation from any body, merely "on his *own* views, for his *own* pleasure, and at his *own* expense."

The measure which succeeded this treason affair, was as extraordinary, as perhaps any thing on record in any nation. The following remarks of that venerable man* already mentioned, completely accounts, in my opinion, for the whole of this scandal:—"I have ever considered the charge "as having no other foundation, than their patri- "otic endeavors to preserve a constitutional and "economical administration of government; to pro- "mote peace and free commerce with all foreign "nations, *but to have no political connection with* "*any;* and in consequence, having opposed all "measures which they judged to be unconstitu- "tional, or inexpedient. If they were mistaken, "they had merit in their motive; but I feel too

* Judge Pendleton, "On a French faction."

" strongly the effects of the measures they oppos-
" ed, to doubt of the wisdom of their opposition."

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. VI.

" Many men have been capable of doing a wise thing, more a cunning thing, but very few a generous thing." *Swift.*

To Vindicator,

SIR,

The manner in which you have attacked an innocent and good-humoured toast, for such it really appears to me, after all that you have said of it, and the obvious designs of your labored vindication, have induced me to submit to the trouble of commenting on some particular part of it.* In doing this, I have several views, which will gradually be unfolded as I advance in examining your performance. The design of this address to yourself is, to draw your attention to some things which regard the temper with which you have written, and

* The toast, under the vehement operation of your analysis, has several times reminded me of the loaf which lord Peter served up to his brothers Martin and Jack: " Bread, (says he) dear brothers, is the staff of life; in which bread is contained, the quintessence of beef, mutton, veal, venison, partridge, plumb-pudding and custard: and to render all complete, there is intermingled a due quantity of water, whose crudities are also corrected by yeast or barm; through which means it becomes a wholesome fermented liquor, diffused through the mass of the bread." *Tale of a Tub.*

which seems quite to have escaped your own observation. This you cannot take amiss, if you reflect a little on the liberty you had taken with those whose supposed sentiments you so violently condemn, and the great difficulty there is in forming a just and impartial judgment of the principles and motives of our own conduct. To a person of so cultivated a mind, as you would give the readers of this paper to understand you are, we ought to suppose that no branch of knowledge can be so estimable, as that of yourself: and that you cannot otherwise than take in good part every attempt to rectify your mistakes, and even acknowledge it as one of the best and most important offices of friendship.

You set out with professing, that you "hope to be governed with all the temper and moderation of which a free discussion of the subject is capable." I have no right to question the sincerity of your profession; but, that you have not been master enough of yourself to adhere to your resolution, is evident, beyond all doubt, from the following instances, in which I think you have manifested a very great want of moderation and good temper.

The first of these instances, is your indirect reflection on the editors of this paper. You ask if it be possible that persons could be found who would publish the sentiment contained in the

toast?* Certainly; the fact more than proves the the thing to be possible; and your question was needless. But, you would thereby give us to understand that the toast is of so indecorous and criminal a nature, that it ought not to be supposed there are any men so destitute of principle and sentiment as to give it to the world. This is the very mildest interpretation your question will admit of. Had you discharged your spleen against them from any other press, I question whether there are ten men in the city who would not have condemned the proceeding: but, purposely to prefer their own press, to fix on them the stigma of dishonor, is something so extremely indelicate and illiberal, that, make what pretensions you please to *mind* and *worth*, and *refinement*, and *moderation*, and *good temper*, &c. &c. we have just reason to dispute them all. Men so useful to the community, and who, with immense risk and expense, and unintermitted labor, daily contribute to our instruction and amusement, ought to have been sheltered from the shafts you so *wrathfully* discharge at the toaster and his associates. But we have been so long accustomed to this kind of *liberality* and *moderation*, from the system of politics you so zealously vindicate, that we now consider it as hav-

* Where I do not quote you verbatim, I shall endeavor faithfully to give your sense.

ing established a legal claim to precedency, in the *liberal* and *refined* occupation of calumny.

Before I proceed to the strongest proof you have exhibited of an entire want of that moderation you had hoped to observe, throughout your vindication, I shall take notice of one, which, tho' of no great importance in itself, serves to shew the extreme lengths to which men may be carried in controversy, by the force of prejudice and dislike to opposition. After making much parade with Montesquieu and De Lolme, you say—" To you " and your bottle colleagues, I do not recommend " the works of great men: for it is impossible that " men entertaining the political sentiments which " it will appear you do, can have a taste that way."

Had you even chosen to recommend any favorite authors of your own, especially on political subjects, and those in particular which occupy the day, I am persuaded your recommendation, with true republicans, would have had very little weight.

The positive manner in which you have expressed yourself, " it is impossible," I have observed, to be very seldom used by men honestly searching after the truth, and who know how much easier it is to assert the absurdity, or falseness of an adversary's opinion, than prove it to be so. Your positiveness, indeed, proves your high opinion of your own sentiments, and your low opinion of others; but has not the least force to determine

the truth of the one, or the error of the other. It may gain to your side the ignorant and unthinking; but will never convince men of sense and enquiry. It has the advantage of being the easiest and most compendious mode of argumentation, and often succeeds in bearing down truth and maintaining falsehood; but it ever suggests the necessity of great caution in assenting to it, whether it approves, or condemns, affirms, or denies.

Is it possible that *you*, who have so great a taste for the writings of great men, and who, we ought to suppose, are not ignorant of any of them, can otherwise than know, how common it has always been, in national debates on politics, for those of one party to charge the other with ignorance, absurdity, and bad principles, not with the least justice attributable to them? To mention no other writings, Swift's *Conduct of the Allies*, and the *Examiner*,* productions of that nation "whence we have derived our manners," might have taught you that no men have gone to greater lengths, in defaming their antagonists, than those who have been the loudest declaimers for monarchs and monarchies, and corrupt administrations. With this remark, I conclude for the present, being with due consideration, your's, COLUMBIANUS.

* Lord Bolingbroke; Dr. Atterbury, bishop of Rochester, and Prior, the poet, were concerned in it; but Swift was the principal in the work.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. VII.

To Vindicator,

SIR,

If those who are so familiar with the writings of great men, as you are, have not so far profited by them, as to know how to practise the duties of benevolence, candor and justice, towards others, in all circumstances, they have read to very little purpose. The practical knowledge of these virtues, however defective the possessor may be in intellectual refinement, is infinitely more ornamental, and useful, than any mere theory of science, which talents and industry may acquire: the former springs from the heart; the latter is merely a notion of the head.

As I am unacquainted, for aught I know, with the toaster and his associates, I am unqualified to judge of their particular accomplishments; but, one thing I can be bold in affirming, that their preference of republican governments, to any others, and their wish for their universal establishment, are no proofs of their want of taste, or goodness. *You*, certainly, cannot be ignorant, that three of the greatest men who have written on this subject, I mean *Sidney*, *Price* and *Priestley*, have not only maintained the same sentiments, but have labored, in the very bosom of monarchy, to

recommend them to the world: and to their writings we are much indebted for the constitution we have adopted. How far you may allow them to be men of taste, I am no ways concerned to know, having already some secret suspicions about your own.

From this I pass to something much more serious and important, both with respect to yourself, the gentlemen you attack, and the nation: with respect to yourself, as it involves the question of your honesty and justice; with respect to the toast, as it implicates the patriotism of those who gave and repeated it; and with respect to the nation, as it affects the common interest in several ways.

You have charged a large number of your fellow-citizens with being guilty of sentiments that tend to prostrate the interests and government of their country, to the influence of France. You have charged them with the crime of being a *faction* in favor of the French republic, "wickedly intent on any system of politics which may disarm the government of its security and energy." You have, in short, denounced them as traitors to their country, and consequently, not only not entitled to protection, but deserving of the punishment of excision from the community they belong to. Certainly, before you could bring such heavy charges against any men, supposing them to be as vile and criminal as you could *wish* them, in the present case, to answer your *abominable* purpose, you

ought to be well assured that the evidence on which you ground your accusations, is not to be contested. Your high pretensions ought to place your charges beyond all doubt of authenticity; and even assure us, that you have too much honor and honesty, to throw promiscuous reproaches on any set of men, without the most satisfactory proofs that could be requisite to vindicate the most sacred regard to truth. But, have you discovered such proofs to support your charges, as would be necessary to give them validity before any tribunal, especially that of conscience? Have you, in a word, formed your opinions of these men, in the characters in which you represent them, after the most scrupulous and diligent enquiry, that every honest jury-man would think necessary for giving a verdict, in such a case or any other? You certainly have not. You have not acted in the case, like a man of principle; you have merely echoed the charges that have been a thousand times repeated, in passion, or from interest and prejudice. You have thought it honorable to resound the common voice of defamation, because it has been done by men of *place*, or of *prospects*. In a word, unless you can make good your charges, by undeniable evidence, we have a just right to think of you in the most disreputable and dishonorable light.

Come forth, then, and prove your accusations to be justly founded. I challenge you to name

the men who have thus basely aimed to bring their country under the influence and direction of the French government; who are wickedly intent on disarming the government of its security and energy. Come forth, like a man who fears nothing so much as the stigma of falsehood and dishonor. You have nothing to dread, in the cause of truth and justice: your evidences are clear, and the strength and justice of the nation are concerned to support you. Be as bold as a man of conscience ought to be, in so great and good a cause. Your country demands of you so important a duty; and, if you do not answer its demands, yourself are chargeable with the crime of misprision of treason, and more criminal than the principals themselves, because, knowing the conspiracy and conspirators, and alarming the public mind with continual fear of their traiterous intentions, you yet obstinately keep it a profound secret, who and where they are. Go, drag this *vile faction* from the dark recesses, where it foments the black and detestable machinations of treason; that the sword of justice may fall upon it in time, and prevent the fatal effects of it, in the subversion of our independence and national existence. Prove yourself to be the patriot you pretend to be, and merit the reward of purging the nation of such malignant enemies, and saving it from their deadly hostility.

No; you cannot do it; you have not within your reach, a single proof of any such treasonable intentions, or of any set of men in the country. I mean American citizens, who wish, much less aim, to bring it, in a single instance, under the influence of the French government; or disarm our own of its energy and security. No; the charges are calumny throughout; and let the infamy of the crimes themselves rest upon the heads of those who malignantly assert them, without a shadow of proof.

You certainly will not plead, that the disapprobation of certain measures of the government, or even an avowed attachment to the French republic, are proofs of criminal faction, and treason against the country. Have not you yourself labored to prove the preference of the British government to our own; and that the subjects of it enjoy more *substantial* liberty than the people of the American republic? And have any of those you have branded with the reproach of being a "vile French faction," avowed a preference of the French government to the American? Have any of them labored so far to degrade the federal constitution, as to prove it to be inferior to the *monarchy* of Britain? Have any of them so far contravened the general sense of the nation, as to deny that the American constitutions are more favorable than any other, to a just and rational liberty,

and every substantial advantage that can be looked for in the state of society? *They* have not; but *you* have done it, and have merited the honors justly due to your superior modesty and penetration.

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. VIII.

To Vindicator,

SIR,

WHEN you exhibited your charges of "faction," "conspiracy," &c. with so much zeal and confidence, you certainly were not aware how open you laid yourself to recrimination. To recrimnate, I allow, does not vindicate; but as you cannot possibly make good your charges, it will serve the more effectually to invalidate them, to show that the principal evils we have labored under, are to be ascribed to that system of politics which you have espoused. This is not only doing justice to those you have accused; but to those also who have been imposed on by such misrepresentations, through want of the means of tracing them to their proper causes, and of knowing the real merits of this business. In discharging this duty to my fellow-citizens, I shall mention but a few particulars, wishing as far as possible to avoid all discussion of our late public measures, for two

reasons—because some of them will inevitably come under review, at a future time; and because we seem, at present, to have a better prospect of tranquility, than for a long time past. This I would in no case disturb, except when the public good seemed to require it.

One evil which has arisen from the aforesaid misrepresentations, is, that many people, in various parts of the union, particularly along the sea-coast, have been greatly alarmed with apprehensions of suffering every kind of mischief from the French faction, that men instigated by the worst of principles could be supposed capable of perpetrating. They have been taught to believe, that the said faction had formed a chain of union, all along the continent, were well provided with every instrument of destruction, and only waited the appearance of a French fleet on the coast, to begin their operations, and open the way for an effectual invasion of the country. In the mean time, it was said, that they were secretly contriving, and executing every measure of more private evil, within their reach. Particularly the destructive fires which, within a few years past, have happened in the principal cities of the union, have been publickly charged to French emissaries, acting in concert with their friends of the faction in this country. This I have heard, at different times, very confidently asserted by individuals. And to such

a monstrous length have these apprehensions prevailed, that I have more than once been told, that the late malignant fever, which has proved so fatal among us, was certainly introduced by the French and their adherents, in order to render our principal sea-ports a more easy prey to them whenever they were prepared to carry their hostile designs into effect.

You may say, that the people who could believe such things must be extremely ignorant. I grant you, that they were; and so much the greater was the crime of imposing on them, by reports which they had not the means of knowing to be false. It is certainly both inhuman and immoral, thus to sport with the inquietudes and fears of that part of mankind who are the least provided against calamity, and the most easily led, through unavoidable ignorance, to take upon credit any thing which they hear asserted by men whom they suppose to be too knowing to be deceived, and too honest and benevolent to deceive.

Another and a greater evil that we have suffered, and still suffer, is the discord and animosity which have prevailed, by means of that system of policy to which you have attached yourself. In discussions on public measures, it has not been thought sufficient to trust them to the powers of argument and persuasion, which alone ought to have been employed; but it has been deemed both

justifiable and patriotic, where argument failed, to resort to the last resource of a weak and overbearing mind, passion, reproach, and insult. Men, persuaded of the goodness of their cause, and conscious of the integrity of their views, who labored to inform themselves of the true interests of their country, and were determined to agree to no measures that appeared inconsistent with those interests, and who had the same right as their opponents to maintain and declare their opinions—were entitled, whatever side they took, not only to indulgence, but respect. Instead, however, of being allowed the merit even of honest intentions, which are always indeed the highest merit, they were treated as enemies of the government and country; as aiming to defeat the most necessary measures for the public security, and to invite the French, not only to continue their aggressions, but to invade the country.

When the debates in the national legislature commenced, the body of the people, I believe, leaned towards the most pacific and economical measures. It was therefore necessary to gain them over, by some means, to that system of policy which several leading characters had contemplated, and which they had determined, if possible, to carry into effect, at any expense. Nor were they long in devising the best expedients for their purpose. To alarm the people with apprehen-

sions of immediate danger, even of their national existence, and that this danger principally arose from the machinations of men among ourselves, who were consulting the views of the French republic, more than the interests of their own country, offered itself as the most certain mean of discrediting, and effectually crushing all opposition. To insure success, every auxiliary was engaged, who was judged a fit instrument for their views. Presses were employed, that were known to be the least under the restraints of truth, decency, or morality, to impute to the minority the worst of principles by which men could be influenced, in order to render them, as far as possible, the objects of the odium and resentment of the people.

Under these degrading circumstances, it was impossible for men of the calmest temper not to be roused to indignation, and to endeavor, as well to strengthen their party, as to vindicate their principles and conduct. This, it was their duty to do, not only on private considerations, but in regard to what they believed to be necessary for the public good; and to persevere in it, so long as there was any hope left of their success. But, the more steadily they adhered to their principles, the more keenly they were pursued with invectives, and false accusations, till at length the body of the nation was gained to the opposite system, and the minority left to bear, as well as they could,

all the indignities and mortifications with which the victorious party could load them. In this manner and on the principles of *your faction*, the nation has been divided; and at a time too, when unanimity was more necessary, than at any other period of our national existence.

You have cried out *faction*, when our animosities have arisen from *your politics* alone; and you have charged, with being *incendiaries*, that part of the people who have been for measures of peace and amity. How is it possible that you should not see the absurdity of your own principles, and their tendency to overthrow the very basis of the American constitutions? But, your prejudice hath blinded your eyes to the most important political truths, and rendered your opinions even contemptible, in the eyes of men who have given these subjects an impartial and serious enquiry, which you certainly have not done. If the French government has calculated on our assisting them against our own, it has been occasioned by the misrepresentations which have been made by your system of policy: misrepresentations which have been *assiduously* made, and with the utmost confidence, till all Europe has resounded with them, and given us an applause, which ought rather to make us ashamed, than to be looked upon as a ground of boasting. It is owing to this very schism, that men of your politics have effected,

that the officers of the British government have, in innumerable instances, insulted our vessels at sea, and even made lawful prizes of them, according to those principles of law which have been adopted by that government you so much prefer to the American constitutions. And yet, the policy you have espoused would cover these insults with justifications, which men of the least knowledge of the relations we sustain by our treaty with that government, would condemn as nugatory and dishonorable. This you cannot but know is the true ground of our political animosities; and that they are entirely chargeable on those who are joined with you in the pernicious system of politics you have adopted. I have purposely avoided going into this subject with minuteness—not, I assure you, through any fear of consequences, but merely out of respect to the public tranquility.

At my leisure, I shall follow you—not for any importance that I annex to your meagre performance; but merely to expose your politics to the just contempt of my fellow-citizens, among whom you appear insidiously to aim to promote animosity and discord.

Your's with consideration.

COLUMBIANUS.

The Servility of Prejudice Displayed—No. IX.

To Vindicator,

SIR,

You must entirely blame yourself, for the unpleasant things your vindication has obliged me to say. You had no provocation to come forward, in the violent manner you have done. There were no reflections in the obnoxious toast, on any measures of our own government; and what, I pray you, had *you* to do with his Britannic Majesty, that you should so highly resent the sentiments implied in that toast?

As a writer of some capacity, and I have no objection to say, of even good talents, I cannot but wonder that you could not see the impropriety of raising on the toast, the political fabric you have attempted. To me it is evident, that you fixed on the toast, merely as a sort of text, to give yourself an opportunity of venting your political sentiments. What your motives were, is a matter of no concern to me. I think myself bound, from the most affectionate attachment to my country, to show, that the part you have taken in this business, is very injurious to our common happiness, and particularly deserving of the severest reprehension, for the injustice you have done to many whose patriotism has merited the highest respect.

Among the slanders you have uttered, against what you are pleased to call the French party, you have said, that they justify the general conduct of France towards this country.

What *you* may have heard to this purpose, I cannot say; but, I have been in habits of intimacy with several persons, whose genuine patriotism has subjected them to the calumnies uttered by such pens as yours; and I can say, with perfect respect to truth, that I have never heard any one of them justify the French government for any of the injuries they have done us. The strongest sentiment in this view, that I can now recollect, went no farther than this—that the French did no more than the British had done before them, and were still doing; and that we might as well be plundered by the one, as the other: but I never heard their conduct justified. So far from justifying them, in violating our neutral rights, the friends of the French government have condemned the injuries they have done us, on much stronger reasons than *you* could possibly give. They condemned them as unjust in themselves, and as violations of those compacts which are common between civilized nations, and necessary for mutual confidence and free intercourse. They condemned them also, as tending to the disparagement of republican governments, which they zealously wished, on the most generous principles,

might become the universal governments of the world. And they condemned, and regretted them, on another consideration, which, whatever you may please to say of it, was generous and patriotic—I mean, their tendency *to cool the affection which subsists between the two nations, and to produce a formal rupture, if not a war*, highly detrimental to both.

The French faction, that is, the minority of the nation, who knew the advantages we derived from an uninterrupted commerce with France, and the gratification and advantages our breach with it would give to the despotic governments of Europe, as well as the danger that would result to our own constitution, were extremely anxious that measures might be taken to compromise, if possible, our differences, and remove the mutual jealousies, which, unhappily for them and us, had arisen to a great height.

Now, you must allow me to say, what there are too strong reasons to believe, that the patrons of your politics were well pleased to think, that the conduct of France towards America would end in war, and an irreconcilable hostility. And to effect an event that seems to have engaged the warmest wishes of great numbers, has not every thing, except a formal declaration of war, been done on our part, that we could conveniently do, in order to bring it about? And is it not, even to

this moment, vociferated from different presses in the union, as indispensibly necessary to our national honor, and even interest; though new envoys have been appointed to the republic, to settle the differences that subsist between us? Nay, have not influential persons among us, endeavored to keep up the idea that war is necessary for us, and inevitable, and even upon the point of commencing? This is a shameful, but undeniable fact; at the same time, it must be perfectly obvious to every man, acquainted with the course of our debate with that government, *that there never have been any just grounds to believe, that it ever had any serious intention of declaring war against us.*

No measures, that we know of, have ever been taken, on their part, for the purpose. And even had they, through resentment, been disposed to hostility, they were too much engaged with their European enemies, to have it in their power to execute such a measure. It is a most disingenuous and cruel thing, to keep up the alarm of war, when there is, absolutely, not the most remote appearance of it; and when the preparations that such alarms have induced us to make, against as mere a chimera as Don Quixote's windmills, are attended with an expense that will be severely felt by us, and probably our posterity after us.

Because some will get into a way of living on the public, without rendering it any service; and

others obtain preferment to useless offices, that will only gratify their own ambition; do you think it just that the nation must be brought under contribution to such private and personal views? Ill as I think of your political opinions and prejudices, I persuade myself, you cannot but think, that your party have driven measures beyond the mark of reason and sound policy.

Were war necessary, for the defence of the country against France, or any other nation, as I know what it means, probably much better than you do, and many others who seem so eager to taste its blessings, I would, as cheerfully as any other man, contribute my part to repel all invaders. But knowing that we are in no danger from France, at least for some years to come, I deem it an abominable piece of policy, to alarm the public mind with apprehensions of so ideal a calamity.

COLUMBIANUS.

FEDERAL SEDITION

AND

ANTI-DEMOCRACY.

No. I.

"Seemeth it a small thing to you, that ye have eaten up the good
"pasture, but ye must tread down with your feet the residue
"of your pastures; and to have drank of the clear waters, but
"ye must foul the residue with your feet?" *Scripture.*

The crisis at which we have arrived is extremely interesting, and must greatly surprise the body of the people. At no period either before or since our existence as a nation, have we been in circumstances equally alarming. The revolutionary war, however terrible to humanity, excited all our energy; and the prospect of acquiring the advantages of independence, rendered us superior to the dangers and difficulties which so great and dignified an object presented. We were then sufficiently united to hazard our fortunes and our lives to gain the right of governing ourselves, according to our own sentiments and principles. We accomplished, by great sacrifice of blood and property, our independence; established for

ourselves the principles and form of the government under which we preferred to live; and had a right to expect that men chosen by ourselves, and equally interested in the management of our affairs, would sacredly have acted on the principles of their office. But we have been deceived in the confidence which we reposed in our own citizens, and are now reduced to a situation which must call forth the most vigorous efforts of patriotism and courage; or all that we have already done must go for nothing, if not for worse.

The republicans have been long held up as men of seditious politics, aiming to subvert the government, and sacrifice the country to the views of France; and many honest citizens have been so far deceived as to believe it to be true. The charges have in no instance been verified, as it was impossible they should, and the authors themselves knew that they could not. But tho' they knew it, they had good reasons for acting as they did; and many of the republicans understood their reasons as well as they did themselves. But they were the more abused for suggesting their apprehensions, that there were principles in operation tending to subvert the constitution and the liberties of the people. It was impossible, indeed, that men who kept their eyes open to facts, and were capable of judging of their tendency, could avoid suspecting that something was in contemplation,

very different from the objects of the revolution and the government which the people had established.

Their suspicions were strengthened by the eagerness of their opponents to silence them by violence, and by the measures which were adopted by government against the sense of the people, expressed by the most decent remonstrances. By a most respectable part of the nation in congress, men of the first talents and information on political subjects, a strong and manly opposition was made against many different principles, judged by them equally to operate against the constitution and interests of the nation. However, after completely performing their duty, they were obliged to yield to the superior force of artifice, employed by government to accomplish its own purposes. That such artifices have been really practised, a long train of measures might be easily brought in proof, could the fact be seriously doubted. These proofs I purposely wave, because they are too disgraceful to the nation to be mentioned, without an urgent necessity should call for them.

Should such necessity occur, no respect to men in office ought to interfere with their publication. The ambition or interest of individuals must never be set in competition with the good of the nation. This sentiment, I hope, will remain indelible on the minds of the people. The people are

the despositaries of our national happiness, and it lies with them to keep or to give it up. While they preserve a just regard to their own rights, and have the spirit to maintain them, they will remain in safety, let the spirit of domination do what it will: but should they languish into supineness and indifference, all the fruits of our boasted independence will be blighted forever, and instead of liberty, we shall leave to posterity the inheritance of chains and all the miseries of oppression.

Such, however, I hope, is the magnanimity of the American people, that they will willingly submit to any present sacrifices that may be necessary to their own independence, and that of their successors for ages to come. In the prospect of receiving the gratitude of those who are to follow us, there is a generous and noble sensation; and we shall deserve the execrations of our children, if we do not secure it.

A Republican of '76.

November, 1800.

Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy—No. II.

The Republicans have all along been confident, that the true reasons of the clamours which the federalists have raised against them, as enemies to their country, must at length appear; that

the people would be convinced, that their dislike to the present administration is founded on their attachment to the constitution; and that the charges brought against them, would ultimately be fixed on their calumniators. In this confidence, they have borne every thing as patiently as possible; resting on the integrity of their motives, and scorning to support their cause by dishonest means.

Before I go farther, I wish it to be understood, that, in speaking of the Federalists, I chiefly intend those among them, who have assumed the rank of leaders, and have practised fraud, and deception, on weak and unsuspecting minds, to promote their views. The body of them, it must be believed, have acted on principle, incapable of falsehood and artifice, of which they have been made the innocent victims.

Whether the Federalists have thought that they could no longer conceal their principles, or that their schemes were ripe for execution, I cannot say; but the mystery under which they have acted, is now revealed. The violence to the constitution, and the contempt of the people, obvious in so many of their measures, have now explained their intentions in the clearest manner. No doubt can possibly remain, that a laborious train of efforts have been made, to detach the people from the true principles of the revolution, and the republican, or rather the democratic form of

government established by their suffrage. Mr. Adams, their oracle and idol so long as he would go with them in their measures, has brought out the secret of their machinations. He has declared, that, " since the envoys were sent to France, the Federalists have been the most seditious men in the nation; that there is a strong party among us, aiming at monarchy; and, as his own sentiment, that we shall never have liberty, or happiness, till out first magistrate be hereditary," or to this effect. No developement can be more interesting to the people; nor perhaps, could any thing be more surprising to the most of them. The republicans are not surprised, because it is no more than what they expected. Almost every measure of the present administration has been calculated to excite alarm, and to enforce a conviction, that it was, from the beginning, conducted on principles which required, as far as possible, to be concealed.

The most obnoxious measures that have been adopted to carry on the hostile designs of the federalists against the constitution, have already been ably discussed, [by an excellent writer, under the Signature of " A Republican," in the *City Gazette.*] On the subjects which he has considered, nothing farther can be requisite to convince the people of the danger into which they are brought by men entrusted by themselves with the management of their political con-

cerns. If they can still remain insensible to their present critical situation, it will be difficult to find the means of rousing them to reflection. However, I do not yet despair, as though all that we have contended for, at so great an expence, were irrecoverably lost. If the illusory ideas of great national wealth and splendour have not already debilitated us to effeminacy, there is yet hope of recurring to our first principles, and resolution. In this hope, I shall suggest, in my own way, the considerations which have occurred to me, of importance to be presented to the public.

The state of our politics at present, is shortly this—The Federalists, till lately unanimous for Mr. Adams, have now divided between him and General Pinckney. The principal supporters of the latter, are the very men who were the most violent supporters of all the measures of government, *until the late mission to France*; and they are the men who raised the loudest clamours of French influence and faction, against the Republicans. How it has happened, that the men who have advocated all the measures of Mr. Adams, except that of pacification with France, have now fallen over to General Pinckney, behoves his friends to explain. The schism, when fully understood, is unquestionably more to the disadvantage of General Pinckney, than Mr. Adams, because, it presents the obvious idea, that General Pinck-

ney's new friends have been detached from their first connection, because they have been disappointed in their wishes for a war with the French Republic. No other reason for their wished for change of a president, can be produced, unless their schemes are still deeper than have been supposed. That they have aimed at war, and used the most direct means to bring it about, no man of the slightest observation can hesitate to believe. Every provocation has been given that directly tended to that effect; and our Federal Supreme Court, at Philadelphia has declared us to be in a state of war with France. Could the Federalists have accomplished this object, the way would then have been clear for forming new connections with Great-Britain, and making arrangements for a change in our system of government. The confusion and distresses of war, with the influence of an army of fifty or sixty thousand men, officered by Federalists alone, would have presented the most promising opportunity, either of bearing down the Republicans at once, or gradually bringing their principles into discredit, till the majority of the people would have been induced to consent to some sort of monarchy, or an hereditary president and senate. The war, in this new projected system, was aimed at, merely as the means; *a change of government was the end.* We have escaped the one, to the great offence of the

Federalists; it lies with the Republicans, by strengthening their principles, to prevent the calamity of the other. This must be their dependence, if they wish to maintain the government of the constitution, and to escape the fangs of ambition and tyranny, which ever aim at the same thing, their own gratification, at the expence of others. While the power is in the hands of the people, as it is with us, they may and ought to maintain it: when it is once lost, it is extremely hard to recover it. An attempt to subject the free American people, to the will of men not elected by themselves, into office, or, after election, abusing their trust to the purpose of domination, ought to be repelled with indignation. The federalists well know, that republicanism is the only impediment in the way to accomplish their designs; and for this reason they have directed their main efforts against it.

May that providence which emabled us to gain our *Democracy*, preserve it to us, against all attempts to subvert, it!

A Republican of '76.

November, 1800.

Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy—No. III.

Besides the direct measures of government, aimed to destroy the republicanism of the nation, which are comprised in No. 24, of the *Republican*, to which I importune the people to pay the most particular attention, there have been employed subordinate means, by which artifice has been substituted in the place of argument, as more calculated to entangle, and less capable of detection.

Of these, I shall give a short statement, that the people may know the true ground on which to defend themselves, against innovations on the government they have chosen to adopt. Let them keep their eyes open, and preserve the patriotic feelings of the revolution, and all will be secured, that we then gained. The federalists have held up to contempt, *the sovereignty of the people*, as illusory, nugatory, ridiculous, and the phraseology of demagogues, or men aiming to lead them, merely for the private purposes of ambition. But, if the people have not been grossly deceived, from the beginning, by their own constitution, *they are truly sovereign;* the power of changing it, or continuing it as it is, lies with them alone. Their suffrage mediately, constitutes every office, and confers every power to transact the business of the nation. They are therefore, unquestionably, *so-*

vereign, and I hope they will never suffer *their sovereignty* to be wrested from them, either by artifice, or violence.

Another expedient adopted, apparently to change our constitution, or form of government, is, the attempt entirely to drop into disgrace, the only single word, in our language, that expresses the principal character of our government; and to bring others into common use, which are of an equivocal meaning, and may be applied to governments of very different constitution.

The government of the United States, is strictly, a representative Democracy, because the power is lodged with the people. The terms, therefore, Republican, or Federal, do neither of them express the nature of our government. Holland, Switzerland, and Venice, were called Republics, though they were unqualified aristocracies. The term, Federal, is still less appropriate, because it merely expresses a compact, and may as properly be applied to a combination of tyrants, such as that formed against France, as to any compact of the people in favor of liberty. This word, as first used for those who agree in adopting the present constitution, was proper enough. But, as it is now used, to express the friends of the present administration, it is merely intended to point out, for odium, those who are for maintaining the constitution, against every attempt to invade it. The

French revolutionists had adopted the term *Democrat*, to signify their political principles; and we had adopted it, from them, and retained it, till the new views of government found it necessary to bring it into contempt. This they have done, to the utmost of their power; but if the people suffer themselves to be deluded out of their rights, by artful terms, it is their own fault: and they will find perhaps too late, that their deceivers have not intruded only, the change of words, but the substantial change of things. *Democracy*, and *Democrat*, would never have given the Federalists so much offence, nor have excited them so earnestly to adopt words of a very different meaning, if they had not most exactly expressed the true character of our constitution.

It may be replied, that words are of little moment; but, they are of great moment: and we must carefully guard against the effects which the Federalists intend by changing names. Augustus, the Roman emperor, destroyed the liberties of the Roman people, by retaining the names of republican officers, after the offices themselves were entirely in disuse. The same thing was done by the early monarchs of France, to throw the influence of the people entirely aside. The Federalists abolished the terms expressive of our government, with a view to abolish the government afterwards. Let democracy, and democrat be treated with what

contempt they may, I hope the people will have the caution, and wisdom, to keep in constant use, the terms which continually suggest to them their power and influence in determining the government they are to live under, and their right to dictate to their public officers, instead of being dictated to by them. The Federalists, in the qualified manner I have spoken of them, have indeed a mortal dislike to these popular words; and if they can succeed in excluding them from *common* use, they will suppose their point gained; and indeed, it will be gained. But, the Republicans, if they act with political prudence, proportioned to this important crisis, will revive the only terms that express their rights and attachment to the constitution. There is more safety for our liberties, in the force of these now obsolete terms, than can well be imagined.

The great, and most promising expedient on which the Federalists have relied, for accomplishing their views, is the name of religion. I say, the *name*, because the Federalists themselves are wide in their opinions about the thing itself, whether it means the religion of nature, the religion of the gospel, or any other religion, or none at all, according to the views which they are pleased to entertain of it.

This, if they were, to a man, called to explain themselves, on a subject of which they had made

so great a use, in order to prevent Mr. Jefferson's election, would, I suspect, put them to extreme difficulty; perhaps go farther than any thing besides, to divide them from one another. They, indeed, speak of Christianity, and call Mr. Jefferson an infidel; but what they intend by the one word, or the other, I am much at a loss to understand, as they have not explained themselves either way. Some of them, however, who would be understood to be very zealous for Christianity, have given much stronger proofs of their being infidels, in effect, than that Mr. Jefferson is such. The means they have used to defame *him*, are such as infidelity itself would blush at; and which are sufficient to penetrate a conscience that feels itself bound by the light of reason only, with the sharp tortures of remorse. Let the "*Republican Federalist*," think of this; and let every man of common honesty and sensibility, think how far such a man is to be relied on! His book indicates a principle which every Federalist of sentiment must abhor:—but oblivion will soon hide a performance so reproachful to humanity.

A Republican of '76.

November. 1800.

Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy—No. IV.

The subject of religion, which has been brought forward, so eagerly, by the Federalists, in order to prevent Mr. Jefferson's election to the presidency, shall now be more particularly considered, out of respect to many conscientious people, who have been imposed on, by different publications.

The Republican Federalist himself has acknowledged, that no legal proof can be adduced, of Mr. Jefferson's infidelity. If then, there be no legal proof of it, pray what kind of proof is there? For, certainly, in such a case, no other proof can be admitted, and no other can be considered as worthy the attention of the people. As the Republican Federalist, than whom no man has ever scrutinized a character, to find out defects, with more eager apparent prejudice and malevolence, has not found this evidence, nothing more can be required, to make his attempts go for nothing. As Mr. Jefferson's infidelity has not been proved, by any of his enemies, that point, I think, *must* be given up, by every man who regards the truth of things, more than the sound of words. With respect to the *profession* of religion, necessary to a chief magistrate in our government, Mr. Adams, who certainly ought to know, has said, "that the

American government, or constitution, is in no respect founded on Christianity." If that be so, and it must be admitted as true. in part, then it cannot be essential, that the President of the United States should be a Christian, in fact. It is certainly not on the profession of Christianity, that the people depend, for a faithful execution of the duties of his office; but, on the strength of the oath he takes, on his initiation to it. If the profession were sufficient, what need of the oath? And, if the oath be the principal security, of what essential necessity is the profession? We are not a nation like the Israelites, all of one religion; nor have our presidents, like their kings, the power to direct the nation, on the subject. If the president be, in fact, a man of no religion, the nation, if religious, will not suffer on his account: and though the president should be the most religious man upon earth, what will it avail to the national happiness, if the people themselves be irreligious?

Mr. Adams is a zealous professor of Christianity; but has that profession maintained the concord of the nation, or preserved the constitution from being violated, or done any thing towards the national happiness? Has it prevented Mr. Adams from receiving power which he ought not to have received; or from acting in a manner which has brought on him the strong suspicion of partiality to a party? It has not. Though his profes-

sion, as such, entitles him to respect, because it is what every man, enjoying the benefits of the gospel, ought to make: yet, it is not the security of the nation; as the events which have taken place under his administration have too clearly proved. But, by any thing I have said, there is no intention to call in question the integrity of his profession. Indulge, with pleasure, the presumption that it is sincere. I only mean to prove, that such a profession is not an indispensable qualification for a President; at least, so far as Mr. Adams has carried his.

The state of Pennsylvania is, perhaps as generally in a profession of religion, and in as decent a conformity to that profession, as any state in the union; yet the people, confiding in his integrity, did not hesitate to make Doctor Franklin their chief magistrate, after other important trusts which that state, and the whole nation, had committed to him; and I do not believe that any part of the union would have objected to him, had he been proposed to the presidency of the nation, though he made no profession of Christianity. I ask, then, why is Mr. Jefferson opposed? What has he done to merit the abuse which has been cast upon him? Has he either written against Christianity, or been known to make it the subject of ridicule, in private companies? I have never heard that he has, though few men in this state have had better

opportunity than myself, to know his real character. I am confident, that there is no man in the nation, who better deserves the confidence of the people, or who is better qualified to execute the duties of a president. Neither his talents, nor integrity of principle, nor steadiness of attachment to the constitution, can justly be called in question. Indeed, I am strongly persuaded, that there is no other man in the nation, so well qualified to extricate us from our present embarrassments. Moderation of temper, his integrity, and refined sensibility, much above the unworthy views of private ambition, render him, in every respect, deserving of the public esteem and preference. His oath would, in my opinion, whatever be his private sentiments of Christianity, be as great a security as we could expect from any man—and what more have we to depend on, let who will be elected to the presidency?

We tried Mr. Washington, and we now suffer the heavy evils of a treaty ratified by him, in a moment of self-dereliction. We have tried Mr. Adams, and our situation is still worse. Let us now try Mr. Jefferson, who has given every desirable evidence of ability and principle. Under his direction we have every thing to hope for—peace with Europe, impartiality in the appointments to national offices, and an unchangeable attachment to the principles of the constitution.

What more can we expect or hope for, from any man?

A Republican of '76.

November, 1800.

Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy—No. V.

I will now ask, why are the Federalists so afraid of Mr. Jefferson's election; and what are the true reasons for so strenuous an opposition against it? Are they apprehensive that he who, is not known hitherto, to have attempted any injury to religion, but has really done it eminent service, by the "act for establishing religious freedom," in the state of Virginia, would, on his promotion to the presidency, use any influence to detriment Christianty?

It is impossible that any man can believe, or suppose it. On the head, therefore, of religion, the people may rest in confidence on Mr. Jefferson; because his opinion is, that religion ought to be entirely free from the intrusions of the civil power, whose officious interference has always injured it, and left to its own authority, which has always been sufficient to support it against all opposition; and this is, unquestionably, the sense of the Gospel, I therefore, pray the people, who regard their sacred rights, to dismiss their fears, on this

subject. Their religious freedom will never be safer in the hands of any man, than in those of Mr. Jefferson. He has given the strongest proof, that any man can require, of principles favorable to the first interests of mankind. It is the extreme of injury to ascribe to him principles, against which he has so strongly contended.

How it has happened, that the people of the New-England states, especially the clergy, whose ancestors fled from persecution for their religious principles, should be so intent, as evidently appears, from their late conduct with respect to government, on some coercive measures on the subject of religion, it would be difficult to conceive, by those who did not know, that they have from the first settlement of the country, employed the force of law, to oblige men to a profession, and support of the Christian religion, on the same principles of the government against which they made the most vehement complaints, and to escape the oppression of which they encountered the difficulties and dangers of emigration to a wilderness.

It appears that the clergy of those states have taken a lead in this business; and they have given strong reasons to suspect that they are opposed to religious liberty; and are therefore, afraid of a man who is so well known a friend to it. There is also ground to suspect, that many of the Episcopal clergy, supposing their claims, to distinctive privi-

leges, to be well founded, wish for an establishment; and are therefore opposed to a pure republicanism, and to Mr. Jefferson, as its advocate and supporter. I do not believe this to be the case with them generally; indeed, I have the pleasure of knowing some of them, who maintain the principle of religious liberty, and would scorn to enjoy a support compelled by the force of law.

Are the Federalists afraid of Mr. Jefferson, for his pacific temper and principles, that be would place the nation in a state of amity with all Europe? I suspect that too many of them are. "Our navy says the *Republican Federalist* would be hauled up to rot." Why should it not rot, rather than the waters should be unnecessarily involved in the calamities of war? Must we be obliged to keep up a state of war, to the endless expense and miseries of the people, to save a few ships from rotting, and to maintain a few men of no service to the nation? O the patriotism, and humanity, of the *Republican Federalist!* Thousands of men must lose their lives, and thousands of money must be wrested from the people, to save an useless, nay, a pernicious navy from rotting! What a saving politician is the *Republican Federalist!* This rare economist would expend Eagles, to save cents. This is economy with a witness!

Are the federalists who are in office afraid, that should Mr. Jefferson succeed, they would lose

their places? It is not improbable that many of them are. But, I have such an opinion of Mr. Jefferson's integrity, that I do not believe he would displace a single man, in whom he found the qualifications necessary to the duties of his office. His election might, indeed, disappoint some eager expectants of his new competitor; but that would affect only a few individuals, who most likely, have no claim to be supported, at the expense of the nation: it would injure no man.

Are the federalists afraid that the influence of Mr. Jefferson would effectually defeat those hostile designs against the constitution, which have been contemplated under the present administration? That there really have been such designs, and still are, there are so many clear proofs that the most incredulous cannot doubt it. Some of them have been already detailed in the City Gazette, of the 24th of October last, from Fenno's pamphlet. Fenno was under the patronage of the leaders of the federal party till very lately. It is therefore just to consider him, in that publication, as expressing the political sentiments of his patrons. So that every man of every party must be convinced that the destruction of the constitution is aimed at.

Besides, the leaders of that party have uttered menaces sufficient to excite the utmost consternation. Every measure of violence to intimidate

the people, has been threatened; and there is reason to fear there has nothing been wanting but the means of execution. Let the electors think of this.

Mr. Adams is said to have declared, that " if the twelve regiments* had been full, and Alexander Hamilton at their head two years, the United States would have been forced to raise another army to disband the standing army."† The same A. H. is reported to have said in Boston, that " if Pinckney was not elected president, he would lose his head, or be at the head of a victorious and triumphant army within three years."

So, then, the people must either appoint the man of Alexander Hamilton's choice, or be made to suffer all the miseries of a civil war!

Does General Pinckney know this, and yet stand a candidate for the presidency on such terms? Or does he patiently bear the dishonor of being brought forward by a man, who, to effect his designs of private ambition, would put himself at the head of an army, to inflict on the people of these states all the terrors of military violence? Can General Pinckney bear such an insult on his affection to his country? I hope he will renounce

* The whole force contemplated was 42,000 hirelings, and 75,000 volunteers.

† Letter from Hartford in Connecticut.

the influence of such a man as Alexander Hamilton with indignation.

A Republican of '76.

November, 1800.

Federal Sedition and Anti-Democracy—No. VI.

As it is not men, but principles, for which the democratic republicans are contending, it is indifferent to them who the president is, provided they can have assurance of his firm attachment to the constitution; and that he will adhere to that, as the rule of his official conduct. This qualification they cannot dispense with. They are therefore urgent for a man of undisputed republicanism, in the sense of the constitution. With them great talents, or great experience, which is better, are of less importance: but where they are united, it is so much the better. The union of these qualifications in Mr. Jefferson, with the others already mentioned, is the reason of their giving him the preference. They would object against no man whom they could believe to possess them in an equal degree.

As the leading federalists have now given up Mr. Adams, and have thrown their influence in favor of General Pinckney; and as the republicans have fairly stated their reasons for supporting Mr. Jefferson: they have a right to ask, on what grounds

is Gen. P. opposed to him? and what proof can be produced, that the latter has stronger claims to the confidence of the people than the former?

Neither Gen. P. nor any of his supporters, can justly take offence at any investigation of his political character, that the republicans may think necessary to make, in so important a crisis as the present; especially as the federalists have investigated Mr. Jefferson's character, even to his private and domestic affairs. The republicans of honor scorn to employ so unworthy a method to gain their purpose. The following queries are in no respect intended to derogate from the real merits of Gen. P. but are as indispensible in our present circumstances, as they are perfectly consistent with the rules of decorum. Or, to speak better, they are such as every conscientious elector, who prefers the interests of his country to private and personal regards, ought to attend to in determining the vote he is shortly to give.

Has Gen. P. done greater services to the nation than Mr. Jefferson; or is he possessed of greater talents for the administering its affairs? Is he known to be more firmly attached to the constitution? Is he known to be a steady frequenter of the public services of religion, and to have done more for the maintenance of religious freedom?

The latter, if any, is the more necessary, as the federalists have opposed Mr. Jefferson most

strongly in respect of his religion. They ought, therefore, in regard to consistency, to make it appear that Gen. P. maintains at least a respectable profession of Christianity, by attending its institutions.

When Gen. P. accepted his commission to the late federal army, did he not know that it was raised against the sense of the constitution, and did he believe it would ever be called on, to repel foreign invasion? Did he ever attempt to persuade the good people of this state, that war with France was inevitable, and to use means to excite in them a spirit of hostility against that republic? When he accepted his commission, did he know, or had he reason to suspect the monarchism of A. Hamilton? Since Gen. P. has stood a competitor for the presidency, has he known that the said A. H. has declared, that he would either lose his head, or, in three years, be at the head of a victorious triumphant army, if Gen. P. is not elected to the presidency? Do the supporters of Gen. P. think him honored, or disgraced, by the patronage of such a man? Do they know the character of A. H. who has published his own infamy unblushing to the world? Can Gen. P. maintain the competition with a man, whose patriotism, and republican principles, as defined by the constitution, are opposed by such men as A. Hamilton, Timothy Pickering, Jonathan Dayton, &c. &c. men who have meditated, and are still meditating schemes for the destruc-

tion of our liberties? Are these grounds on which Gen. P. can honorably stand? Extremely far from it. Unless these queries are satisfactorily answered, it is impossible that the electors can nominate Gen. P. consistency with fidelity to the sacredness of their trust. Let them remember what sufferings our constitution has cost us. Let them remember, that this is the great struggle for the establishment of political liberty. Let them remember, that their decision will affect distant generations; and that they themselves and their children will be free, or enslaved, as they shall make it. So interesting a crisis ought to banish from their minds, all prejudice, and partiality; and determine them to act like men who are responsible for as high a trust as ever was reposed in mortals.

A Republican of '76.

November, 1800.

Mr. JEFFERSON—No. I.

Messrs. Freneau & Paine,

I have read, with very great pleasure, *the character of Mr. Jefferson*, in your paper of the 26th July, as it is both just in itself, and well suited to our present situation.

The unprovoked wrongs which have been accumulated on that great and deserving man, have excited the astonishment and indignation of all impartial people, who are acquainted with his merits; and will exhibit to posterity, as strongly perhaps, as any other circumstance, the true character of that influence, by which the nation hath, for some time, been controuled.

Considering his talents, his candor, his modesty, his early exertions in the cause of his country, his decided attachment to republican principles, and his steady perseverance in those principles: considering that he has been an invariable friend to the rights of the people, in opposition to the views of aristocracy, and the assumptions of unconstitutional powers: considering, in a word, the rank which he now holds in the government, and the important services he has rendered the nation,

as envoy abroad, and as the secretary of state at home—one cannot sufficiently wonder, that Mr. Jefferson should have suffered more calumny than any other man in the union. His patriotism, his political integrity, his morality, his religion, and even his domestic concerns, have all been the subjects of the most acrimonious and malignant discussion, against which he hath stood patient, and, till very lately, unsupported, except by his own innocence and dignity of sentiment.

The friends of Mr. Jefferson, that is, all the true republicans in the nation, the advocates for economy in the administration, for the inviolability of the constitution, and for peace, though they most sensibly felt the injustice that was done him, were confident in his virtues; and, therefore, resolved to defer his vindication, till such time as the public good would demand it. With respect to Mr. Jefferson himself, no vindication can at any time be requisite; but, it is not just that the nation should be debarred of any services which his talents are capable of rendering it, because the spirit of competition, of envy, and political party, would wish to obstruct them.

People who are not informed of his real character, will naturally ask, is it possible that all that has been said against him can be mere slander? or, what heinous offence has he been guilty of, that he has rendered himself obnoxious to so

many people, and provoked so much severity of censure? I will tell you, my countrymen, plainly; and I assure you, I will intentionally assert nothing that I cannot support by unquestionable facts. *Mr. Jefferson was a candidate at the last election for a President, and he will also be one at the next.* This is the true reason of all that torrent of obloquy which has poured upon him from so many parts of the union, especially from the eastern states.

I am now on so delicate a subject, that I can only suggest to you some general thoughts: not because it is difficult in itself, but because I am not at liberty to speak out my sentiments as freely as the subject would require, and as the constitution gives me a right to do. No; our hands are manacled, and our lips are locked up, and our presses are embargoed, in such a manner, that the best friend to his country dare not, without danger of an heavy fine and imprisonment, to utter any thing against the President, or the heads of departments, or either house of congress, or any of their measures; we are obliged to use great care, not to suggest any direct reflection on any of their late acts, though we should judge them ever so unconstitutional and oppressive. We may, indeed, say any thing against Mr. Jefferson, however false and slanderous, without the least hazard; and the advocates for the sedition law, and the alien act,

have not spared him. After next March, however, I hope we shall *once more be free men*, and shake off that torpor which hath so long benumbed us!

But, to return from this digression. The political sentiments of Mr. Jefferson were, on several subjects of importance to the nation, known to be different from those of Mr. Adams; so that the friends of the latter, in the competition for presidency, did not hesitate to adopt the expedient of representing him to the people, in every view which they supposed might make unfavorable impressions of him, and affect his election: and this they have continued to do, with great perseverance.

The general charges brought against him, respect his politics and religion. For the present, I shall pass over the former, because his enemies have relied more on the latter, for rendering him odious among the common people; and they have stopt at nothing, to accomplish their purpose.

As to Mr. Jefferson's private sentiments of the Christian religion, I cannot particularly speak, not having had an opportunity of knowing them; but whatever they may be, I believe it to be agreeable to the natural reservedness of his temper to keep them pretty much to himself; and while he conforms himself to the laws of his country, he is certainly no farther amenable to it.

The source, however, of a great part of this odium, I believe I can trace with some exactness; and it is as follows. At the commencement of the revolution, in order the more effectually to unite the people in the common cause, an act was passed in the state of Virginia, to dissolve the establishment, that the different religious societies might stand upon the same footing, and have a common interest. This measure, though in every view just, was secretly disrelished by the more bigotted Episcopalians; and the great majority of the clergy, the chief of whom were Britons, were so highly offended, that they either left the country, or declined the public service, and lived on the glebes; while a few continued to officiate, in confidence that the establishment would at some time be revived. From the passing the obnoxious act, this was secretly contemplated; and after the peace, the main point being then gained, the Episcopal clergy embodied themselves into a convention, and met at different times, under the sanction of the state. A bill was brought forward, chiefly, I believe, through their influence, for enforcing a general assessment for the support of religion; and in favor of this measure it was strongly urged, that without the interferance of the state compelling every man to pay something towards it, there would soon be no religion left. The bill was insidious in principle; being really intended

by many to prepare the way for the revival of the establishment; and some of its over-zealous advocates incautiously let out the secret, which proved the occasion of its destruction.

The late Col. George Nicholas, Mr. Madison, and Mr. Jefferson, opposed it from the first; and at length Mr. Jefferson brought into the assembly a bill for the establishment of religious freedom, which passed. This proved so severe a disappointment to the advocates for the assessment, and especially to those who made sure of regaining all the emoluments of the establishment, that it became an unpardonable offence; and Mr. Jefferson was held up for the public odium, as an enemy to the gospel and to all religion.

I am sorry that excellent instrument is not in my possession; but, to the best of my recollection, Mr. Jefferson has expressed himself in terms respectful to the Christian religion; and particularly appeals to it, as every where disclaiming the principle of compulsion, and trusting itself wholly to its own powers of conviction and persuasion. Whatever opinions he may entertain of it in other respects, in maintaining this to be its true principle, he so far does it honor; as the contrary sentiment is both disrespectful and degrading to it; and has, in my opinion, more than any other cause, obstructed its progress. Had Mr. Jefferson advocated a general assessment, and especially had

he gone into the views of the clergy,* and of others who wished for exclusive ecclesiastical privileges, it is more than probable he would have been left to enjoy his own creed, without molestation. But, having from the first movements towards the revolution adopted the most liberal sentiments, both on civil and religious liberty, and uniformly maintained them with a strength of argument which could not be resisted, and a fervor of interest which could not be diverted from its purpose, all the friends of the ancient order of things, both foreigners and natives, became his determined enemies. Some of his own countrymen, who valued themselves on greater antiquity and splendor of family, seeing the influence he obtained, and the brilliancy of his reputation, became tinctured with envy; and though they wished success to his political sentiments, were unwilling that he should eclipse themselves. The same thing, it is known, happened to the late distinguished Mr. Patrick Henry; and Washington himself suffered on the same account. The talents, the literature, the unassuming modesty, and the distinguished public services of Mr. Jefferson, placed him beyond the reach of his enemies, who dared not, on any of

* It is justice to remark, that several of the clergy of other religious societies were, at first, for an assessment; but on suspecting its ultimate design, became unanimous against it—both on this account, and as being unjust in principle.

these points, to attack him. Here, however, they have some way or other found means to assail him; and they have relied for the success of the measure, on the credulity of the people. But, so far as I can do it with integrity, I shall endeavor to obviate the success they promise themselves, that the unworthy artifices of partial and designing men may not have the effect to overthrow us.

Supposing Mr. Jefferson not to be a believer in the Christian religion, and that he has adopted a system of religious opinions for himself, independent of the authority of revelation—has any one a right to call him to an account for so doing? Or, does his exercising such a right, prove him disqualified *for serving the nation in any station* to which it might think proper to appoint him? I am persuaded, that no man of any justness of sentiment, will think that it does. What has any state, or what has the United States, to do with any man's religion, provided he conduct himself conformably to the laws establishing the order necessary to the public good? There is nothing farther can be demanded of him; because the laws cannot possibly take cognizance of any thing but his external actions.

Besides, after all the noise that has been made about Mr. Jefferson's religion, every man of common sense must know, that religious opinions have never been made among us, the test of qua-

lification for civil offices. Whether in appointing governors, envoys, heads of departments, or even Presidents, we have never considered their religion, but their talents, and other qualifications necessary to discharge their respective offices to the public advantage. It is, therefore, most partial, and injurious, to demand of Mr. Jefferson, a qualification for public service, which we have never demanded of any other public officer.

AMYNTAS.

August, 1800.

Mr. Jefferson—No II.

WE may justly demand of those who object against Mr. Jefferson's election to the presidency, on the score of religion, what particular opinions on the subject are necessary for that office; and what have hitherto been required, in those who have obtained it? But should we press them very closely on this point, I believe that many of his violent opposers would be extremely embarrassed to give an answer, as the constiution has not prescribed what system of doctrines the president is to adopt; and, as probably, not a few of themselves are liable to the same charge which they so vehemently urge against Mr. Jefferson.

If it were requisite to do it, I am prepared to show that this is, in fact, the case. I am prepar-

ed to show that, if Mr. Jefferson had not been a candidate for the presidency, and had not stood in competition with President Adams, his religious opinions would not be now contested. No man would have thought it necessary to brand him with the character of an infidel: no one would have given himself the trouble to say, whether he believed in the christian religion, or not; or whether; he ought to attach himself to any religious society, or not. Such officious meddling with his right of thinking for himself, on religion, as well as politics and philosophy, would have been deemed, almost by every man, in the last degree indecent and unjust: Nay, I have not the least doubt, that not a few of these zealous, but *temporary* advocates for Christianity, would not a little value themselves on being thought philosophical infidels. But, though we should allow their claim to infidelity, we should not as readily grant that to philosophy; for true philosophy would teach them to treat so meritorious a man, with more humanity and decorum.

That this shameful clamor has been raised against him, not from any respect to religion, but merely from political motives, to obstruct his promotion to the presidency, may be easily made apparent to the conviction of every impartial man in the nation; and it is of great importance that it should be clearly understood by every man who

has a true feeling for the national happiness, and who places this before all private and party considerations.

First—Until the present administration of government, no man was called to account for his religious opinions; his promotion to a national office depended on his political knowledge, and supposed integrity to discharge the duties of that office, to the general good. His opinions respecting Christianity were never brought into account one way or another. It was certainly on this principle that Dr. Franklin was employed in different very important offices, though it was well known that he never connected himself with any pariicular religious society; and it is equally known, that in our own state in particular, there have been men in the most public stations, who made no particular profession of the Christian religion, and were known to neglect its most characteristic institutions. This, I have ground to believe, has been the case in most of the states. That there are at this time, while Mr. Jefferson's religion is so industriously held up to the odium of the nation, several men in important federal stations, whose religious opinions, if it were of consequence to canvass them, would not be found respectful to Christianity, I have not the smallest doubt. But, they are not condidates for the presidency; and besides, which is a very material csnsideration, they are advocates

for all the late measures of government; and may, therefore, believe the Christian religion or not, as they think best, and not be accountable to any body. Their political opinions being on the right side, are the undisputed test of their virtue, and the inviolable sanctuary of their safety. They bear the brand of the Deity whom they serve, and in his temple no man may molest them.* This is the high privilege they have secured, by having the skill to model their politics by the true standard. Had Mr. Jefferson acted with the same sagacity; had he vehemently declaimed against the religion and politics of France, especially the latter—had he advocated the non-intercourse bill and war with the republic and a federal army in a time of peace†—and high presidential prerogatives, and profuse expenditures of the national money, and great loans at enormous interest, and the sedition and alien laws, and supernumerary embassies; and been an enemy to free discussion of public measures, and the right of petitioning and complaining against them—there is no doubt with me, that he would now be in as peaceable

* See the ancient customs of Egypt and Greece.

† I can never be persuaded, without other information than the public has possessed, that any cool, intelligent statesman in the nation, even seriously believed that an army would be necessary to repel an invasion from France. The French had neitheir a navy, nor an army to spare for the purpose, nor any object to gain by an invasion; nor had they the disposition to attempt it.

possession of his religion, as when he was envoy or secretary of state.

Were Mr. Jefferson the only man who has been publicly accused of infidelity, and enmity to all religion, and good order and morality, and the welfare of the nation; it might be supposed that some peculiar atrocity of opinions had marked him out as a fit object of the censure and odium of all good men, and more especially, of all the citizens of America, of a just and sober way of thinking. But, so far is he from having stood alone the butt of the most iniquitous obloquy, that with him has been associated, for the same purpose of eager malevolence, every man in the nation, whose opinions of the politics of the country have been similar to his. And it is of importance to my purpose to remark, as strongly supporting the opinion I have advanced, that, proportionable to the conspicuousness of station and influence over the public mind, which any man in the minority has possessed, have been the labors of the adverse party, to misrepresent, and crush him. Nor has this been a contingent of occasion, but the business of a close-compacted system, never intermitting its operation nor for a moment inattentive to its purpose. To such intensity have the minds of Mr. Jefferson's adversaries been wrought up, by the passion of party, the impatience of opposition, and the envy of superior merit, and

reputation! while he, with the tranquility becoming a philosopher, and the patience worthy of a Christian, has borne it all! Such immobility of temper, amidst the outrage of injury, is neither compatible with profligacy of principle, nor the meanness of an ambitious mind. Whatever it be, Mr. Jefferson is in possession of some strong, coercive principle, which maintains his equanimity entire, where few men would be capable of less than retaliation.

AMYNTAS.

August, 1800.

THE RETREAT.

WITHIN VIEW OF THE SEA.

From bustling cares exempt, that cities know,
And punctual forms, and deaf'ning noise and smoke,
I seek that peace, which rural scenes bestow;
And find it here, beneath this verdant oak.

While from the noonday-sky full on my head,
The sun sheds down his keen relaxing heat,
With eager wish, but languid steps, I tread,
To gain refreshment in this cool retreat.

These wide extending limbs, with foliage crown'd,
That through the changing year knows no decay,*
And pendent moss, soft waving o'er the ground,†
Excludes, with friendly shade, the burning ray—

* The live oak is an evergreen.

† So luxuriant is this plant, that it often hangs from the oak to the length of ten or twelve feet. Where several of these trees stand together, in a calm day, they affect the mind with a soft and agreeable gloom. In the clear sunshine, with a moderate wind, the waving of the moss, forms a moving picture, exceedingly soothing; and even at a distance, seems to fan and refresh the spectator.

Nought moves around, save yonder blacken'd plain,
Where slav'ry, urg'd, digs up the glowing soil:
Or cooks, by smoaking stump, its portion'd grain,
Scarce equal to the waste of constant toil.

Before me spreads, with sluggish swell, the deep—
By nought disturb'd, save where that breaker tells
The cautious seaman, far his course to keep,
Nor tempt the place, where dreaded ruin dwells—

And where that bark, full looming on the eye,
With crouded canvass ply'd for cooler seas,
And follow'd oft with owner's anxious sigh,
Slow wakes the foam before the languid breeze—

Where too the sounding beach, with shells o'erspread,
That, mould'ring, long upon its sands have lain,
Repels the surge, that rolls upon its bed,
In scattering spray, back to the mass again.

In this still scene no envy wounds my breast,
With vip'rous tooth, whose bite no cure doth know:*
Still pleas'd, though life in all its forms were best,
And most, if all, who feel as men, were so.

* This is only intended to convey this serious sentiment, that so malignant is the state of the mind, from which envy proceeds, that it is much easier to cure any other passion than it.

While that wide bounty, on which all depend,
To me, what suits my warmest wish, hath sent—
To others also may its peace extend,
And not one bosom be with anguish rent!

Let gainful commerce pile the merchant's store
With glittering wares, in distant India wrought;
Or brown Potosi fill his desk with ore—
That ill, with blood of men so often bought:

Let others, vers'd in theories profound,
The mazy plans of polity unfold,
Their various merits learnedly expound,
And be with Locke and Montesquieu enroll'd:

Let heroes lead the havoc-train of war,
Where thousands mix in death their wasted blood,
And gain, by sharpen'd woes, extended far,
That lawless rule, ambitious Cæsar woo'd:

Or, like that man,* impell'd by nobler aims,
Obtain what Cæsar ne'er at Rome could find—
A just reward, superior far to fame,
Unbounded trust, and grateful love, combin'd.

* The American chief.

Let majesty its toilsome honors wear—
Usurp'd by pow'r, or gain'd by native right—
O'er subject millions stern dominion bear,
And vainly boast of all-sufficient might*—

Let these their choice, whate'er it yields, possess,
Of power or joy. Though it should perfect be,
One wish of mine should never make it less:
Since my own lot is peace—enough for me.

Of life not weary, nor at man chagrin'd,
What tender office e'er my hands can do,
Shall prompt be done, with sympathetic mind,
To heighten joy, or soothe the pangs of woe.

Were knowledge serves, that doubtful thought to guide;
To cherish virtue, to support the weak:
With unreproachful boon, spare want provide,
And wipe the tear that wets the orphan's cheek.

From cares like these, to steady habits grown,
Springs sober joy, which no reproach can wound:
Which stays behind, when others far have flown,
And not a trace of what they were, is found.

* And the king spake, and said: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built?"—Dan. iv. 30—"Whom he would he slew, and whom he would he kept alive." Ibid v. 9.

When social life no active task requires,
And tow'ring thought has dropt, with wearied wings,
From those bright themes, that wake sublime desires,
And nurse that hope, that looks to future things:

Be then the fields of science my delight,
Or varied walk and prospect unconfin'd;
Where blooming truths still on the steps invite,
And fill, with light serene, the wand'ring mind.

But, chief of all, from airy height to trace,
Through optic tube, by silent night, the spheres,
Far glowing round, through tracts immense of space,
True to their destin'd course, through endless years.

Here, thought intense that wondrous law hath shewn
Which binds the planets in its wide domain,
Which rules the comets, far in skies unknown,
And guides them back to mortal view again—

'Tis this to each its proper place assigns,
Or in the centre fix'd, or round to roll—
'Tis this in one great system all combines,
And keeps up perfect order through the whole.

While close in shades of night conceal'd it lay,
Deep myst'ry still the prying eye perplex'd:
But, clear disclos'd o'er all spreads open day,
And science frees, with schemes discordant vex'd—

That heaving deep this power attractive tells,
As o'er its wave, full orb'd, the moon doth glide,
When on its bending shores it foaming swells,
And when it leaves them bare, with ebbing tide.

Here wakeful observation too descries,
While others shun in sleep the midnight air,
What various lights are borrow'd from the skies,
To aid the busy works of mortal care—

Not only these assist, whose lengthen'd ray
Still guides the eye to where they hold their place,
But those who ne'er their scanty light display
To mortal view, but through the faithful glass.*

Great work of perfect thought! where no defect
E'er yet was mark'd in all the wondrous plan!
Whose steady lights the docile mind direct
Far up to him, who form'd this work for man.

Here hopeless Hume, from truth still wand'ring wide,†
The boast of error, slighted by the wise,
Might too have seen what Newton clear descry'd;‡
And gain'd with him immortal wisdom's prize.

* Brydone, when on the top of Etna, supposed, from the unusual number of stars which were then visible that the satellites of Jupiter might have been seen with the naked eye, had that planet been above the horizon.

† This particularly refers to his principles of philosophy and religion.

‡ That the whole system is the result of perfect wisdom, and its minutest parts superintended by the same power that gave it existence.

But pride of reason, scorning to be taught,
By *Light* himself, in human form display'd,
In gloomy maze confounded ev'ry thought,
And man's first, warmest, noblest wish betray'd*.

From lower cares exempt, well might the sage,
Of thought matur'd, and him aspiring high,
Peruse, unwearied, this most splendid page
Of truth, and feast insatiate the eye.

From orb to orb, traversing, unconfin'd,
Through fields of radiance, wid'ning on the view,
The mental pow'rs increasing vigour find,
And order's glowing forms still on pursue.

Beyond the scanty line that bounds the sight
Quick Fancy flies; and, Reason for her aid,
New worlds descries of purer air and light—
Their order, laws, and ends to her display'd.

What various life of matter more refin'd,
What pains and pleasures, politics, and care,
What high pursuits employ the nobler mind,
And what relation they to us do bear—

* Immortality.

And these advent'rous Fancy nightly sees
Oft as th' enraptur'd eye on heav'n doth gaze:
Such forms, though all ideal still must please;
Such still the soul from earth to heav'n can raise.—

Pure range of placid thought, where, grosser cares,
Like those thick fogs, which wrap this lower spot,
Impetuous passion, which the soul impairs,
Low aims and doubling art are all forgot—

No wan-eyed Envy, to herself a prey,
No Discord, rending the soft ties of love,
No sly Revenge, who shuns the face of day,
In these calm regions, e'er with joy could rove.

Nor Avarice, still looking on the ground,
Nor Vanity no other's worth who know,
Nor languid Luxury, in bowers found,
Nor Cruelty, who feeds on others' woes.

To scan the spangled sky, and commerce there,
Where wisdom sheds her clear instructive ray,
Demands for higher arm and nobler care,
Each meaner passion banish'd far away*.

* Philosophy does not always overcome, though it must regulate the passions, less or more, in proportion to the assiduity and success with which it is cultivated: and certainly the subjects we are upon, next to those of revelation, have the most direct tendency to improve the soul in great and generous affections.

Be then my thoughts on these high themes employ'd,
When other cares of higher aim allow:
As aids to virtue still be these enjoy'd,
Virtue alone true happiness can know.

SYLVANUS.

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